











# ESSAYS AND ESSAY-WRITING



# **ESSAYS and ESSAY-WRITING**

**FOR INTERMEDIATE, B.A. AND B.COM. STUDENTS**

BY

**P. C. BANERJEA, M.A., B.L.**

*Late Professor of English Literature, Vidyasagar College ;  
Formerly of St. Xavier's College, Calcutta*

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To My Beloved Pupils  
who  
have given me many a happy hour in life



## PREFACE

It is about three years now that I have retired from the work of teaching. Yet, the memory of those happy days is still as fresh to me as ever. And, indeed, during the long years of my career as a teacher of English language and literature, I have come into contact with many brilliant young men, as students and colleagues at college, for whom I still cherish feelings of the warmest affection. The following pages, devoted to essays and essay-writing, were undertaken at the request of these young friends, a few months after my leaving college. They desired me to write a book of essays in clear and simple English, so that our students may at least understand what they read. They made this request because they knew that, all my life, I had been a very humble and modest teacher—a teacher who had never lectured over the heads of his pupils.

A great poet has told us that 'a little learning is a dangerous thing', and he is surely entitled to great respect. But I have felt that, for a teacher of undergraduate classes in our university, little learning is not at all a dangerous thing. It is a real blessing to one who has to lecture to boys and girls reading in the colleges affiliated to our university. It is well-known that the vast majority of these young learners have a very poor knowledge of English, and cannot follow the lectures delivered by their learned professors. This is quite likely in our days when some of the leaders of our country have been carrying on a valiant crusade against the reading and teaching of English. However, it is now realised by most of our enlightened men that no nation can live or prosper without a fairly good knowledge of an international language like English—a language which is taught even in Japan, China, Malaya, Soviet Russia, and many other countries that are none too friendly towards the English. That is why it should be our duty to make the study of English as easy, simple, and attractive as possible. With this feeling, I have always tried my best to teach my boys how to speak and write English in a simple, clear, and elegant style. And this is perhaps the reason why, with all my failings, I had been a fairly successful teacher of English all through the thirty-four years of my association with the students of our colleges. Words of learned length have always scared me out of my wits, and high philosophy has no attraction for me. I strove, so far as it lay in me, to speak and write in a language, which was at least understood, if not appreciated by my students.

And it is some of my old students and young colleagues at college who induced me to take up this humble work. At the very outset, I have given my ideas about the methods of essay-writing. Then I have dwelt, at some length, on the elements of style as a reflection of personality. This is followed by a fairly large number of essays on themes of varied interest to students preparing for Intermediate, B. A., and B. Com. Examinations of our university.

In writing them, I have always borne in mind that the essay is a composition of moderate length, dealing with the most essential elements of a subject in broad outlines. I have also felt that there can be no rigid rules about the length of the essay. An essay, as it seems to me, may be short or a little longer than usual. But the student should take care to see that he does not repeat the same ideas over and over again. Lastly, the essay is something more than a mere statement of facts. There is an art in essay-writing, which makes it clear, well-reasoned, and interesting. Lastly, the points raised in the essay should be illustrated with examples, and enlivened with the thoughts and reflections of the writer himself. So, in dealing with some of our national problems, I have given my independent views, without meaning any disrespect to the genius and wisdom of the leaders of public opinion in our country. The students and their teachers are also invited to think over these questions and view them in their own light. Any suggestions made by them will be thankfully accepted and considered with every care and respect.

#### THE AUTHOR

### PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

In the course of a few months, the first edition of this book has been exhausted. I feel that this is due, above anything else, to the kindness and good will of my generous friends and pupils. In this edition, some new topics have been added, and all the essays have been very carefully revised.

I hope that the second edition will be as warmly appreciated as the first one.

#### THE AUTHOR

## INTRODUCTION

The essay is one of the most interesting forms of literature in our times. We live in an age of restless activity, when the vast majority of readers have little time for a deep and careful study of any question of the day. Everyday we look for the newspaper as the first thing in the morning. It gives us not only news but also the views of the editor on one of the most interesting events or problems of the day. Indeed, in the columns of a journal we have something like a short essay on one of the most important topics of the day. The same thing may be said of the articles on arts, letters, religion, politics, and science that appear in the pages of the well-known periodicals of our times. It is this very art which has been developed and perfected in the hands of distinguished thinkers and writers from age to age. In its true sense, the essay is an 'assay' or analysis of some object or thought. It is, more or less, a trial of a subject, or an attempt towards it, and not in the least a thorough or final examination of it. Dr. Johnson goes a step farther when he defines the essay as 'a loose sally of the mind, an irregular, undigested piece, not a regular and orderly composition'. The articles that appear in the columns of our daily papers are things of this type. They are mostly no better than 'loose sallies of the mind'. It was in the same vein that Bacon described his essays as 'dispersed meditations'. His essays are brilliant specimens of 'concentrated wisdom, with little elaboration of the ideas expressed'. Montaigne's essays reflect the inner life of the man. In them he speaks of himself in 'a medley of reflections, questions, and anecdotes'. His essays are rather long and rambling, and offer a vivid contrast to the depth, brevity, and clarity of Bacon's 'dispersed meditations'. But these two great writers have one thing in common. Their essays are, more or less, 'loose sallies of the mind', and not a thoroughgoing and final examination of the subject under discussion. Yet, this is a view which does not agree with the highly developed essays of modern times, essays like those of Carlyle, Ruskin, Matthew Arnold, Herbert Spencer, or Lord Macaulay. They are as varied as the colours of the rainbow in the sky. And they are elaborate pieces of composition, rich in thought and feeling, and written in a fine, eloquent, and graceful style. Indeed, the essays of Lord Macaulay and Herbert Spencer are really small books. It is perhaps due to these changes in the meaning of the word that Murray's 'New English Dictionary' has defined the essay as "a composition of moderate length on any particular subject or branch of a subject". "The

Essay proper or Literary Essay, is not merely a short analysis of a subject, not a mere epitome, but rather a picture of the writer's mind as affected, for the moment, by the subject with which he is dealing."

The true essay of our times is essentially personal. It is the play of the author's mind and character upon the theme with which he is dealing. It reveals his attitude not only to the subject but also to life at large. The next thing to be noted is the way in which he introduces his ideas, develops them, and brings them to a conclusion. And, in this connection, we must observe whether he has been able to present his ideas in clear, simple, direct, and forceful language, by means of examples which are at once appropriate, attractive, and interesting. Last of all, we must see whether he has been able to clothe his ideas in a graceful style—a style that bears the impress of his personality. This personal element is found, at times, even in the essays of Bacon. And it is always present in Lamb's 'Essays of Elia', mingled with a sweetness, all his own.

Again, the essay is the forerunner of the novel in the history of English literature. As Macaulay tells us, in his own inimitable language, the social essays that appeared in the pages of the 'Spectator', were the pioneers of the great novels of the future. Every one of these papers, he tells us, is a complete story in itself, and all of them combined have the charm of a novel. These essays led the way to the great novels of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. And we find that, in the novels of Thackeray and George Eliot, essays are often introduced in the story. We may read Addison's essays as a kind of autobiography in which he describes the days of his early life, his youth, and old age. The essays of Lamb, Hazlitt, and Leigh Hunt cover a wide range of subjects, as they wrote for a large, enlightened, and thoughtful public. There is no doubt that Lamb speaks largely of himself. But in his essays we find Lamb not merely as he was by himself. We see him also as he was associated with his friends, relations, and the times in which he lived. By reading his essays, we may form a vivid idea of the men and women of the nineteenth century, their fashions and fancies, and their minds and manners. Above all, he gives us a most brilliant and lively picture of the city of London, humming with life.

Coming to later times, we read the essays of distinguished writers like Robert Louis Stevenson, Matthew Arnold, Augustus Birrell, Edmund Gosse, Emerson, Aldous Huxley, G. K. Chesterton, C. V. Lucas, and many others. These essays are a little too subtle, delicate, and refined for the common reader. They are enlivened with the writers' thoughts and feelings and brilliant

flashes of wit and humour. We may also read, in these days, the delightful essays that appear in the columns of well-known monthly magazines of the East and the West. They are very thoughtful papers on things of varied interest in an excellent style.

We are, however, here concerned with the type of essays expected of the students appearing at university examinations. These students should bear in mind that there is no limit to the number of subjects set for essay-writing. Any and everything may be a subject of essay-writing. And in writing an essay, a student must think not only of the matter but also of the manner in which he will express his ideas. In other words, a good essay should be rich in thought and graceful in style. It should also be flavoured with wit and humour. A dull and dry analysis of the subject, with a conclusion which is equally colourless and uninteresting, may be an essay in form, but not in reality. That is why a student must read as much as he can to acquire a good deal of general knowledge. This can be done by wide and varied reading of books, journals, and daily papers. He will learn little or nothing by reading the few pieces selected for university examinations. Moreover, the pieces that are selected now-a-days are mostly worthless and dry as dust. So, a student will have to look upon his College-Library and Common-Room as his best teachers. In the library, he will find any number of good books that will give him delight and make him feel interested in literature. And in the Common-Room he may read very excellent journals and periodicals, English and Indian. These will give him ample material for a good essay. And a student may also learn much if he attends the lectures of eminent men, and takes part in debates and social functions.

After having acquired a fair degree of general knowledge, he should try to think over what he has learnt. It will be good for him to bear in mind that it is the pains taken by him in thinking that will give him the power of thinking. If he does not like to exercise his brains, he will never develop the power of thinking. His condition will be like that of a man who does not learn to swim because he has never gone into water.

Next, he will have to arrange his ideas in order. He will have to select what is relevant to the subject before him, and what must be left out as beside the point. And then he will have to come to a conclusion, which follows naturally from the trend of reasoning followed in the essay.

After having dwelt on the general aspects of the essay, as it is expected at the university, we may give some practical direction for the guidance of our students.

- (i) In the first place, a student should read the title of the essay carefully and see whether he understands it clearly.
- (ii) Next, he should decide from what point or points of view he will deal with the subject.
- (iii) Some time should then be devoted to the planning of the essay, arranging the materials and ideas in order, and rejecting those things that are not clearly to the point. It will perhaps be better to make a rough outline of the plan.
- (iv) After this, it will be the duty of the student to see that there is a fit proportion between the different parts of the essay, and the space devoted to a particular topic should fit in with its importance. It will be seen that some of the things dealt with in the essay may be much more important than others. So, naturally enough, they will fill in more space than some other topics of much less importance.
- (v) If it be found that the essay has been overloaded with facts and arguments, it will be better to leave out some of the materials which are of little interest to the subject under treatment.
- (vi) A student should never begin to write an essay until he has spent some time in thinking out the subject. Then he should always have the central thought before his mind, and take only one point at a time.
- (vii) It will be a nice arrangement if a single paragraph be devoted to every point developed in the essay, and every topic is illustrated with well-known and interesting examples.
- (viii) An essay should be concluded in the last paragraph, and the conclusion must follow naturally from the arguments advanced in the essay.
- (ix) Again, an essay must have an artistic beginning and artistic end. To our mind, an essay should never begin abruptly with a definition of the theme with which it is dealing. The introduction should be brief and pointed. When a student begins to write an essay, he should tell the reader what the title means. He may as well begin the essay with a suitable quotation bearing on the subject. But it should be neither abrupt nor rambling.
- (x) Finally, the essay should be written in clear, simple, and graceful language. A student should not only try to say what he wants, but say it directly, forcefully, and finely if possible. There is no use reading an essay which is written in a language that has no life or charm in it.

## STYLE

Style usually means the way or the manner in which a writer expresses his ideas. If we read the writings of distinguished men of letters, we shall find that each of them has a way of his own—an art of which he alone knows the secret. There is, in every line he writes, a ring like that of a well-known voice. He gives to it a touch of beauty, all his own. We see the master's hand at work not only in the choice of his words and phrases, but also in the brilliance of his wit and humour, and the beauty and splendour of his flights of fancy. This is his art, his style, and no one else may attain to it. Is there any other poet who can ever approach the grandeur and glory of Shakespeare and Milton? Is there any artist who has painted the picture of the Madonna as vividly as Raphael? From this it will be clear that style is, in reality, a personal quality. Every writer uses language as he finds it. But the man of genius will mould it to his own uses, and leave on it the impress of his personality. His thoughts and ideas, feelings and emotions, hopes and fears, joys and sorrows, are clothed in a language which has a grace, a flavour, and a charm of its own. In a word, not only his thoughts and feelings, but also the language in which he speaks are personal. If we read the writings of a great poet or novelist carefully, we shall find that they reveal not only the hand but also the heart of the artist. Indeed, the style speaks the man and gives us a glimpse of his character. It is a record of his intellectual, spiritual, and artistic growth. It will give us an idea of the masters from whom he received his lessons in life, the books he read deeply, the influences by which his character was moulded, and his changing outlook on the world and its problems. This will be evident if we observe the changes that came upon Shakespeare's style of writing during the twenty years of his dramatic career—changes that are familiar to all students of his memorable plays. This is what Dowden writes in his 'Shakespeare Primer'. "In the earliest plays the language is sometimes, as it were, a dress put upon the thought—a dress ornamented with superfluous care; the idea is at times hardly sufficient to fill out the language in which it is put; in the middle plays (*Julius Caesar* serves as an example) there seems a perfect balance between the thought and its expression. In the latest plays this balance is disturbed by the preponderance or excess of ideas over the means of giving them utterance. The sentences are close-packed; there are rapid and abrupt turnings of thought, so quick that the language can hardly follow fast enough; impatient activity of intellect and fancy, which, having once disclosed an idea, cannot wait to work it orderly out." If we watch closely, we shall find the same evolution of thought and

style in the poems and writings of master-singers like Tennyson and Browning, and our own national poet, Rabindranath Tagore. Rabindranath is a versatile genius, and a class by himself. And not only in his songs and lyrics but also in his prose works, we shall feel the charm of his personality and the wonderful and varied melody of the language in which he has clothed his ideas. Indeed, this is the distinction between a fairly talented writer and a real genius in the realm of art and beauty. When a man of genius wields his pen, he leaves an indelible impression of his personality on almost every page and every line of his writings. Is there any reader of English poetry who does not feel the touch of Milton's magic wand when he reads Satan's address to the fallen angels in Hell in 'Paradise Lost'? And when we read the wonderful soliloquy of Macbeth or Hamlet or the sallies of wit between Rosalind and Celia, Olivia and Viola, or Beatrice and Benedict, we feel that it is Shakespeare and Shakespeare alone who can give us these gems 'of the purest ray serene'. And we shall also have the same feeling when we come across one of the thundering exclamations of Carlyle, or the long, resounding periods in which Macaulay describes the glory, grandeur, and historic memories of Westminster Hall on the eve of the impeachment of Warren Hastings. Similarly, almost every line of Shelley echoes his intense love of beauty, his weariness of soul in a world pining for joy and happiness, and his passionate longing for Light and Liberty. In our country, every lover of poetry will be able to feel the difference between the lyrics and tales in verse composed by Rabindranath, and the solemn and resounding melody of Michael Madhusudan Dutt's *Meghnad Badh Kabya*. In the same way, he will be able to realise the distinctive qualities of the style of Bankimchandra and Saratchandra Chatterjee.

It is needless to multiply instances. It is enough for the present to point to a few great personalities, who have given us many an hour of joy and inspiration in life. Their noble thoughts and ideals, couched in sweet, musical, and beautiful words and phrases, ring in our ears everyday. They are not only eternal but also imitable and incomparable. When we place them by the side of the men who have written millions of pages that we have read and forgotten, we feel how great, glorious, and sublime they are. This is the real meaning of style, the distinctive manner in which a great writer clothes his thoughts and feelings.

But the word is generally used simply in the sense of the manner of writing or expressing thoughts in language. It is not given to every man to write in a style which

has a grace, a charm, and a beauty of its own. There are only a few immortals among the generations of men who have expressed their thoughts in language. Among the well-known writers of English prose there are great scholars, thinkers, philosophers, and statesmen. They write clearly and eloquently, and their power of reasoning is irresistible. But, with all their talents, they have not been able to leave an impress of their personality on their writings. Yet, we have no hesitation in saying that they write in a good style, and tell our boys and girls to follow their way of writing. And we must bear in mind that the tendency of our times is towards clearness, simplicity, and forcefulness in expressing our ideas and feelings. We turn to the English Bible for the beauty, charm, simplicity, and rhythm of its language. Leaving aside a few archaisms, can we ever think of anything more homely, more thoughtful, or more beautiful than the words in which Jesus Christ speaks to his people in his Sermon on the Mount ? Only a few examples will tell us what it is like.

"Consider the lilies in the field, how they grow ; they toil not, neither do they spin : And yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these."

"Ye are the salt of the earth : but if the salt have lost his savour ; wherewith shall it be salted ?"

"Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in Heaven."

We may, as well, turn to the beautiful lines of Rabindranath Tagore in his *Gitanjali* or Song-Offerings that took all Europe by storm.

But this is not the way in which English is generally taught in our schools and colleges. Our boys and girls have to read pieces selected from the writings of authors who lived in the seventeenth or eighteenth century. These authors write in a highly ornate or involved style, which is now entirely out of vogue. We may read them for their thoughts in the higher stages of our university education. But they should never be taken as models of style as, since then, much water has flowed down the Thames. The result is that the more ambitious among our students try to imitate writers like Addison, Johnson, Ruskin, or Carlyle. So, they stumble at every step, and lose their way in a bewildering maze of words and phrases. They never learn real English, and waste their energy in vain and futile efforts at fine and learned writing. That is why our boys and girls should read much more of the well-known writers of our own times, and the articles that appear in the columns of some excellent English journals and periodicals. They will, we feel, learn much more of the art of writing good English by reading 'Aesop's Fables'

in words of one syllable, or the 'Royal Readers' which have been banished from our schools for ever. But this is for their readings in prose. For poetry, they must turn to Shakespeare, Milton, Dryden, Burns, Byron, Keats, Shelley, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Tennyson, and Browning for ever and for ever. These poets have left behind them realms of gold in which we may travel from age to age. And, above all, they must read their Shakespeare, again and again, the 'myriad-minded' Shakespeare whose light will never fade. The more we read Shakespeare, the more shall we realise the mystery and glory of his imperishable genius and the beauty, melody, and witchery of his noble language. In a word, he is not only the master-singer of the world but also the fountain of English undefiled.

Let us repeat that everyone of our students should try to write in simple, direct, and forceful language. It will be very good for him if he uses simple sentences as far as possible. He should surely try to clothe his ideas in beautiful words and phrases, if they come to him naturally. But he should never hunt for beauty or load his writing with 'quotations' that are out of the way or irrelevant. If we think over it deeply, we shall find that good English means good memory. As we read poetry and literature, we shall come across many gems—many beautiful words and phrases—that we shall do well to commit to memory. Our sages have rightly observed that reading, again and again, is often more precious than knowledge. We should turn to those great writers, pretty often, so that every fine thought, every beautiful word of theirs, may be impressed on our memory and burnt into our soul. Their works are a treasure-house of the purest gold, open unto those who have the eyes to see. We shall, while writing, remember how a great poet has presented the same idea in words of unfading beauty. We may surely pick up these gems, but we must take care to use the right word in the right place. This is the most effective way of fine writing. If we simply fill our pages with words, phrases, and verses, that are out of place, we shall write in a way which will be not only clumsy but also ridiculous. Our writing will then be like a splash of dazzling colours on a penny handkerchief. Wide reading and deep thinking will teach us how to write clearly, and use 'the right word in the right place'. If a young writer walks along this path, a time will come when he will be able to coin beautiful phrases of his own, and leave the impress of his personality on every good thing he has ever written. His writing will then have a charm and flavour, all its own. In a word, simplicity should be the watchword of every student of literature. He should always try to write in a simple and elegant style, and think before he writes. This will set him on the right path, and his labours will be amply rewarded in the fulness of time.

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# ESSAYS AND ESSAY-WRITING

## MY FIRST DAY AT COLLEGE

I still remember my first day at college. I had heard much about the liberty and charm of college life when I was at school. That is why I was eagerly looking forward to the day on which I would join one of the colleges of Calcutta for higher studies.

The results of the School Final Examination were out early in July. I had passed in the first division, with several letters to my credit. I had done very well in English, Mathematics, and Science, and was, therefore, advised by my teachers to go in for Science. So I joined the First Year Science Class of Presidency College. I spent a restless night before my first day at college. I started for the college at nine in the morning, to be in time for the first lecture at 10 A.M. As I walked up the stairs, I saw streams of students going up to join their classes, and I saw among them the familiar faces of boys who had passed out of my school a year or two ago. As I reached the second floor, I took some time to find out my lecture-room. And when the bell was gone, I entered the class.

Our Senior Professor of English addressed us for an hour. He spoke to us of our duties in college life. Then he dwelt at length on the beauties of literature and the best method of learning English. He told us that English is a living language, and it is ever changing with the change of times. So a student must read a good deal of the writings of modern authors, in order to learn modern English. He should not be content with reading a few selected pieces in his text-books. He must march with the times, and read as much of the finest English prose and poetry as he can.

Then came the Professor of Mathematics, who told us many stories about ancient mathematicians like Archimedes, Newton, and Laplace. After this I enjoyed an hour of rest in our Common-Room. There a large number of students were talking about many interesting things, such as the latest football matches in Calcutta, or the great game of cricket in other countries. They were also talking of the agitation against the increase in tram-fares, the large number of failures in university examinations, or the latest films at the cinemas. Some of the boys were playing at carom and table-tennis. But there were a few serious students, who were reading the latest European or English monthlies on the Common-Room table.

Again, the bell rang and I rushed for the Physics Theatre across the lawn. There one of our professors gave us an idea of the great discoveries of science, and showed us some interesting experiments. We were simply thrilled with delight when we saw those experiments. We dreamt that, in the fulness of time, we too might become great scientists like Jagadish Chandra Bose, P. C. Roy, or C. V. Raman.

On the whole, my first day at college filled my heart with high ambition—the ambition of becoming a great chemist or physicist. But what I enjoyed most was the air of freedom at college. We could go to our classes at will, or we could keep away from them if we liked, and in the Common-Room we could talk loudly or play indoor games at will. Moreover, we had not to attend classes for hours at a stretch. There were intervals in between the classes, which we enjoyed like anything. This was a respite unknown to us at school. But this was not all. There was no fear of being pestered with questions.

Again, the lectures delivered by our professors were much more interesting than the lessons we learnt at school. And in the new world of freedom, I made some friends on the very first day of my life at college.

I had seen little of the social life at college on that day—the debates in the College Union, the recitation competitions among students, or the theatricals and variety entertainments before the Pujah Holidays. But we knew that they were coming, and with a heart full of joy and hope, I returned home in the afternoon.

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### YOUR EXPERIENCE OF COLLEGE LIFE

College life has a charm, all its own. I still cherish a most pleasant and lively memory of the years I spent at college. And in thinking of those days, I am naturally reminded of my first day at college. It is one of the happiest, sweetest, and most thrilling memories of life.

It was a great day in my life when I attended my first lecture at St. Xavier's College. When I was at school, I had heard from some of my friends much about the pleasures of college life. But I had no real idea of what college life means.

I passed my Matriculation Examination from Mitra's Institution, Bhowanipur, in the first division, with letters in Mathematics, and Science. Soon after the announcement of the results, I got

myself admitted into St. Xavier's College. But I had to wait for days till the college reopened on the second day of July. The magnificent buildings and green lawns of St. Xavier's College attracted me, first of all. What a change was it from the rather small rooms and crowded classes of Mitra's Institution to the splendid halls, long corridors, and lovely lawns of St. Xavier's! Just at 10-30 A. M., all the students assembled in the Theatre Hall. Soon after came the members of the staff, headed by the Reverend Father Rector. When we were all seated, Father Rector welcomed us on behalf of the college. He also spoke to us on the duties of students and the need of discipline in college life. After attending his speech, we went to our classes, and the work of the college began. We heard the lectures delivered by the professors, and felt highly flattered when we were addressed by our teachers as 'gentlemen'.

I was given a list of the books I had to read, and I bought them in the evening. I found that I would have to read a large number of books. I also realized that the course of studies at college was much higher and heavier than that at school.

When I came to my class on the next day, the professors and demonstrators showed us interesting experiments in Physics and Chemistry. After some time, we had to work in the laboratories, and make experiments of our own under the guidance of lecturers and demonstrators. I was deeply impressed by the splendid laboratories of St. Xavier's College, neat, clean, and well-equipped. Then, from day to day, I learnt my lessons in Science with the help of experiments. At the college, we had the privilege of reading English under European professors. They helped us to learn good English and pronounce English words with right accents. It was by coming into contact with our European professors and taking part in debates that we learnt how to speak English clearly, distinctly, and gracefully. Now that we have left college, we feel that, in this respect, we are more advanced than the vast majority of students who have passed out of other colleges. Many of the eminent barristers of High Court and high officials of the government are old students of St. Xavier's.

At St. Xavier's we had ample facilities for sports. There were also social entertainments and theatricals, organized by the School and College Departments. St. Xavier's is the only college which has an excellent playground within its compound. It is also the only college which may boast of a grand, spacious, and up-to-date stage for dramatic entertainments. The boys who used to take part in sports had to practise regularly, so that they might do well in Inter-collegiate sports. There were also facilities for gymnastics, lawn-tennis, badminton, and indoor games like carom or pingpong. In the Theatre Hall there is a piano, on

which the students may play if they like. There is also a College Orchestra, which plays during social gatherings and other occasions. The dramas staged by the boys in English and Bengali have always elicited the warm admiration of enlightened and distinguished visitors to the college. The boys of St. Xavier's carried away the first prize in Inter-collegiate sports from year to year. All these are great things, and made our college life enjoyable. We had work with play, and joy with reading.

When I first came to college, I was simply delighted with the freedom, liberty, and recreation that came to us after long years of bondage. We have had the pleasure of mixing freely with our teachers in tutorial classes, seminars, and social gatherings. We read with them and played with them. We had a good library and reading-room. Not only were there thousands of volumes of books in the College Library, but also a large number of well-known magazines and periodicals. The pleasure of writing articles for the College Magazine kindled in us a zeal for writing. On the whole, there was ample scope for all-round culture at St. Xavier's College.

There was another thing which did us great good. It was the discipline maintained by the college authorities all along. St. Xavier's had regular classes, even in troubled times. We realized that we must learn to obey before we can command. Here we learnt to respect our teachers, make the best use of our time, and take part in healthy sports. We felt the truth of the old and wise maxim that a healthy mind can grow only in a healthy body.

With the years, I have learnt many things and seen a little of the world around me. I have had my moments of bliss and hours of sorrow. Yet college life has a magic spell of its own, and it still thrills my heart with joy, hope, and happy dreams of the years to be.

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## COLLEGE UNIONS—THEIR IDEALS AND ACTUAL WORKING

We are living in an age when the love of liberty is in the air. Not only men but even boys and girls reading in colleges feel the influence of this new spirit. That is why, in every college there is a Union which voices the feelings, aims, ideals, and aspirations of the students on its rolls. It is an association in which our young learners have ample facilities for learning the art of self-government. The Union is under the control of the college authorities, and receives the willing help, guidance, and encouragement of the principal and professors of the college.

In ancient India there was, in every *asram*, a leader among the students who used to look after the institution in the absence of the *guru*. During British rule there were monitors, who were charged with the duty of maintaining discipline among the students. In some hostels there were prefects, who looked after the needs of the boarders, and kept in touch with the authorities. But today it is the College Union that carries on all these duties.

There is no hard and fast rule by which College Unions are regulated in all the institutions affiliated to the university. But there are some general principles that are observed by all. As soon as the admissions are over, each class is called upon to choose its representatives on the Executive Committee of the College Union. And these representatives meet to elect office-bearers, the most important among whom is the General Secretary. A member of the teaching staff is generally elected to act as the President of the Union. There are, however, colleges in which the General Secretary is elected by all the students of the college, and even the President is a student elected on the same principle. The Executive Committee of a Union draws up its scheme of work for the session. It makes arrangements for the Annual Social Gathering, Sports, and the supply of interesting journals, periodicals, and magazines for the Common-Room. It also organizes lectures, debates, and cultural and science exhibitions. In almost all the colleges, there are dramatic entertainments on the eve of the Puja Holidays. Time was when there were no Unions of students in most of our colleges. The work of a College Union was carried on by the Calcutta University Institute, which was patronized by eminent professors, lawyers, artists, and high officials of the government. The Governor's Garden Party, Annual Steamer Trip, and Dramatic Entertainment in aid of poor students, were the most remarkable social functions of the Calcutta University Institute every year. Great actors like Sisir Kumar Bhaduri and Naresh Chandra Mitra

had their first lessons in acting at the University Institute. The Inter-Collegiate Music and Recitation Competitions, and the annual dramatic performance, were looked upon as great events in the civic life of Calcutta. They attracted a large and enlightened audience, and elicited the warm admiration of one and all. Let us hope that, once again, the Calcutta University Institute will become a real Union of all the colleges of Calcutta, and a centre of knowledge, culture, art, music, and inspiring social service.

There has been a vast increase in the number of students now-a-days, and each college has a Union and programme of its own. The Union voices the grievances of the students about the quality of teaching, inconveniences of routine, and measures taken for enforcing discipline. It also helps in forming the University Corps, and enlisting members for the territorial forces. It calls upon the students to devote at least a part of their time to social service, such as nursing the sick, teaching in night schools, helping poor boys with books, doing relief work during flood and famine, and many other things for the good of the country.

We are not of those who think that our college students should take no interest in politics. But our boys and girls should remember that it is their first and foremost duty to read and to respect their parents and teachers. In a word, they must realize the blessings of knowledge and the value of discipline. But to our great disappointment, in almost each and every institution, the College Union has become a centre of strife between rival groups of students, each trying to run down the other. Yet they should remember that, so long as they are students, they should not take active part in politics. This is most undesirable. All our students should bear in mind that their first and foremost duty is to work for the good of the college. They may feel interested in current politics. But it is the duty of the Union to impress on each and every member that no work can ever be done without knowledge and discipline. This is the lesson that we learn from the lives of all distinguished men in the East and the West. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru would never have been so great, if he had not spent long years of life in laborious study and patriotic service to his beloved motherland. He had to spend many years of his life behind prison bars. Yet even there, he devoted long hours a day to reading, writing, and thinking of the future of India. Indeed, some of his best books were written amid the silence and solitude of prison life. It is the same lesson that we learn from the life of Mahatma Gandhi. All through the crowded years of his life, he was inspired by an ardent and passionate longing for truth, knowledge, and the kindly light of God in Heaven. Indeed, our boys must read and learn many things, before they enter public life. They should realize the value of

discipline, learn the art of public speaking, and imbibe the spirit of service, which should inspire a true leader of men.

The Commission presided over by Sri Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan has very rightly stressed the need of developing the spirit of self-government among the students. It has gone so far as to suggest that the duty of punishing students for small offences should be entrusted to College Unions.

We may not conclude this essay without a note of warning and advice to our young students. They may have their grievances against their college or the university. They may feel that they need more freedom in carrying on their social and cultural activities. But they should plead for them with respect, courtesy, and the humility born of knowledge and culture. They should remember that the relation between a teacher and his student is like the relation between a father and a son. It is not like the revolt of a people against a despotic government. College life is not the time for plunging into the muddy whirlpool of politics. All through their college days, let them remember that reverence belongeth to wisdom.

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### COLLEGE COMMON-ROOM

There is an air of freedom in college life, which appeals to a boy more than anything else. Gone are the days when he had to sit for six hours in his class-room, with only a short interval for tiffin and recreation. Gone are the days when he had to obey the rules of the school at every step. And gone are the days when he was punished for the slightest breach of discipline, or fined for absence from his class. When he comes to college, he feels as if he is breathing the breath of life for the first time. He has to attend his classes and listen to the lecture of his professors. But he has intervals in between the hours which give him much relief and cheer up his spirits.

He spends these hours mostly in his Common-Room. Here he can mix freely with his friends. He can talk with them about the most interesting topics of the day, such as a football match, a political meeting, or a cinema show. He can also air his views about the professors under whom he is reading, the quality of their lectures, and their mannerisms. Indeed, there are some students who can imitate the voice, elocution, and intonation of their professors wonderfully well.

There are long tables in the Common-Rooms, on which are laid many periodicals and journals. There are daily and weekly

newspapers, and monthly magazines, Indian, English, or American. On both sides of these tables are high-backed benches. The students sit on all sides of the table and read these papers and magazines, which are full of interesting stories, lively descriptions of football or cricket matches, and beautiful articles on the problems of the day. Some of these periodicals and magazines are illustrated with splendid pictures of mountain scenery, sea-views, and thundering waterfalls. All these things enable the students to learn many things, and discuss them with their friends.

In the Common-Room the students may enjoy indoor games, like carom and table-tennis. Indeed, many of the students in the Common-Room make the best of their leisure hours by taking part in indoor games, or watching them with keen and lively interest. Moreover, there are students who are deeply interested in politics. They carry on lively discussions about the present situation in the country, the policy of the government, the measures taken by them for flood relief, or the spread of primary education. These young men are politicians in the making, and they receive their early training in politics in the Common-Rooms of their colleges. Here they learn also a little of the art of public speaking, which is a great gift in these days of democracy. And all thoughts of examinations and all the cares and worries of life are forgotten in the Common-Room. In a word, the Common-Room is the student's republic. Many great friendships are made in the Common-Rooms of colleges. It is often found that many a college student is a bit too shy to ask any questions in the class. He nods when the professor goes on with his lecture. He may not clearly understand what he hears. Yet he keeps quiet, as he fears that he may be laughed at by the more advanced students of the class for his ignorance. But he can open his mind when he comes to the Common-Room, and can discuss anything he likes with his friends. This discussion may clear up many points, and give him a good idea of the subject on which the professor had been lecturing in the class.

We feel that a Common-Room is most indispensable to college life. The ideal of true education is to develop all the faculties of the mind to the fullest extent. If a student goes to college simply to attend classes, he will not learn much that is needed for a healthy and cultured mind. If he spends all his time in reading, he will become a bookful blockhead. He will simply swell the ranks of those melancholy, brooding, stooping, and spectacled young men who are known as 'scholars' in our country. When these gentlemen work as lecturers in colleges, they cannot make any impression on their students. They spend hours and hours everyday in the dark corners of libraries, or at their reading tables at home. They are not interested in sports, amusements,

## A SCENE IN THE EXAMINATION HALL

and the amenities of social life, and beware of the trials and troubles of a political career.

Yet there are a few colleges that have no Common-Rooms worth the name. They have very little space for a Common-Room. What they have is really an apology for a Common-Room, which does no good to the students for whom it is intended. So every college should have a large, airy, and well-lighted Common-Room for its students. But our students too should remember that they must not abuse the advantages of a Common-Room. They are free to read, to play in-door games, or talk with their friends just as they like. But they must not disturb the classes, shout loudly, or quarrel among themselves in the Common-Room. In a word, they will have to see to it that their liberty does not run into license. At college and indeed in every sphere of life, a young man must leaven his freedom with responsibility, and his love of joy with a sense of dignity. And above all, he must learn to be humble, tolerant, and respectful to his teachers. Even when he is in the midst of a lively discussion, he must listen patiently to the views of others, respect them, and then think over them deeply. He should bear in mind that this is the way to wisdom.

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## A SCENE IN THE EXAMINATION HALL

There are things we never forget so long as we live. One of these is the scene in the examination hall, first seen in life. So long as we are at school, we are not much disturbed at the thought of an examination. We have to sit for any number of examinations throughout the year in our familiar class-rooms among familiar faces. But at the end of our career at school, we have to sit for the School Final Examination conducted by the Board of Secondary Education. Then come the university examinations, one after another, until we settle down in life. When we appear at the School Final Examination, we sit in a crowded hall among 'strange faces and other minds'. We are in the midst of a novel and thrilling experience of life.

We stand in awe and wonder before the bell rings and the scripts and question-papers are distributed among the candidates. There is a good deal of stir and noise, when the boys are busy finding out their seats and taking out pencils and pens from their pockets. Some of the boys are seen reading their books feverishly during the last few minutes. But many of them are

standing in groups and discussing possible questions and answers. Those who are intelligent and well-prepared are talking smilingly with their friends. But to the majority of students, examination is something like a coming disaster. They are sitting gravely at their desks, and thinking of the questions that are yet to come.

At last the bell rings and the noise fades away. There is an ominous silence in the hall. The scripts are being distributed and the candidates are attending to their pens. Those who had been reading their books to the last moment, hand them over to the invigilators. Then every one of them folds his script neatly and writes down his roll-number on the cover of the answer-paper. After this the question-papers are distributed to them. There is a happy smile in the faces of those to whom the questions are favourable—questions which they expected and for which they had prepared with great care and diligence. But there are many who are puzzled, and look at the ceiling or through the windows thoughtfully. Many of the boys and girls feel, at first, that they do not know anything about the questions that have been set for them. But as they read the paper carefully, they find that many things come out slowly from the dark corners of the mind and help them to answer the questions fairly. Yet there are some who have come to the Examination Hall with little or no preparation, and find that most of the questions are beyond their reach. These boys sit for an hour, and then leave the examination hall after handing over their papers to the officer-in-charge.

After half an hour, the boys settle down to their work and write steadily. Some one calls for a glass of water and others follow. And the waterman has to run from one corner of the hall to the other with glasses of water for the thirsty boys. The same thing happens when a boy wants another script or a piece of blotting-paper. At once, a number of boys will call for new scripts and blotting-papers. Sometimes one of their teachers, who is perhaps an examiner, comes to the hall and drops a word of encouragement. But there are also unfortunate incidents, the number of which is increasing from day to day. It is found, at times, that a student is copying his answers from papers hidden in his sleeves, or books carefully concealed beneath the desk. It may also be that he is copying the paper of another student. Such a student is warned sternly if his offence is light, but he is expelled when he has done anything serious.

At last the three hours given to them are almost over. The first warning bell goes fifteen minutes before the time to stop writing. Then the boys begin to write very quickly in order to answer all the questions on the paper before they leave the hall. Any one who looks at the boys and girls in an examination hall at this time, is amused to see a vast array of pens moving fast like the turning

of wheels in mills and factories. There is an air of anxiety and resolution in their faces. 'Now or never' is the feeling that stirs their hearts during these fateful minutes. Then comes the five-minute warning-bell, and the pens in the hands of the boys move more quickly. Some of them are trying to answer the last question at break-neck speed, and some are revising the answers, already written. The invigilators are crying out to remind the boys of every minute that passes away. At last the final bell rings, and the boys are called upon to stop writing. Some of the boys are very slow and hang on to their papers, until they are snatched off by the invigilators. This is the moment when there is a regular tug-of-war between the invigilators and some of the boys in the hall. Sometimes very hot words pass between them. But the die is cast and the scripts must be submitted at once.

The boys leave the hall smiling, fretting, or talking excitedly with their friends. They are discussing the merits of the questions. Some of them are pleased with the questions but many others are crying down the paper-setter in a loud voice. At last the hall is empty. It is then cleaned up and made ready for the next day's examination.

Indeed, our first experience of an examination-hall is rather awful. But as we sit for higher and higher examinations, we are able to shake off what is often called "examination fever". We get used to examinations and take them most calmly and confidently. And this is more so in these days, when a man has to sit for an examination at every step. He will have to pass through the ordeal of an examination, even if he tries for the job of a petty clerk.

That is why, we never forget our examinations, even in the advanced years of life. We dream of them in sleep when we are old. And as we look back at the years when we were young students, we feel amused to think of the hopes and fears that moved us in those hectic days of life.

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## THE NIGHT BEFORE AN EXAMINATION

The night before an examination is a night of deep anxiety, restlessness, and disturbing dreams. Most of our students read very little during the years spent at college. They feel much more interested in sports, cinema-shows, and political meetings. So they leave their books aside, and go about in search of amusements. They put off their studies for the future. Everyday a student feels that the thing he has left undone today will be done tomorrow. But that tomorrow never comes, and things remain as they are. He feels an urge for reading his books only when the examination draws near. He snatches eagerly at some help-books and prepares a few questions out of them, so that he may get through his Test Examination, somehow or other. But he becomes very active only a month or two before his university examination. He becomes more and more restless everyday, until he comes to the day before the examination. On that day he reads up to the late hours of the night. 'Now or never' is the question with him. He has picked up a number of questions from his friends, or heard rumours about some in public parks or gardens. He has also learnt that well-known professors of other colleges have suggested some possible questions for the year. So he sits at night with his friends, eagerly discussing these questions and hastily glancing through the pages of his books. When his friends have left, he tries to prepare the answers to these questions more thoroughly. He is, however, at great pains to find out the answers of the questions which are rumoured all about. But since he has rarely touched his books, he hunts through the pages in vain for an hour or so. At last he hits upon the answer, although he is not sure whether it is right or wrong. Again, there is many a boy who tries his luck by lottery. He writes down a few important questions on little slips of paper, tosses them up into the air, and picks up nine or ten of them at random. These, he fancies, are the questions that will be set at the university. Then he goes to sleep. But for hours he cannot sleep, and hears the clock strike the passing hours of the night. He tosses restlessly in bed, fearing lest he should be disappointed in his expectation of questions, and compelled to leave the examination hall with a heavy heart. At last he feels too tired and falls asleep. But even in sleep, he is haunted by bad dreams. He dreams as if he is very late, and he is trying to enter the examination hall at 11 o'clock, that is an hour after the bell is gone. He is, he fancies, not admitted into the hall, and loses one precious year of life. Or he dreams as if all the questions set in the paper are either too difficult or unknown to him. He shudders at the thought of failure and comes home in tears. But just at this moment, he wakes up and feels relieved to find that the examination is still to come.

Yet every candidate for the examination is not in the same helpless condition. There are good boys who have carefully listened to the lectures of their professors, and read their books diligently and regularly all through the year. Those of them who have taken up science have worked in the laboratory and carried on experiments, from day to day, under the guidance of their teachers. They have also attended tutorial classes, and have not only discussed but also written out the answers of all likely questions well in advance. Such students have no fear of examination, since they are well prepared, and remember every important thing in the syllabus. They do not burn midnight oil on the night before the examination. They take rest for a few days before the examination to keep their brains clear. They sleep soundly and dream sweet dreams—dreams of passing the examination with distinction and going on for still higher studies in foreign countries. They are cheered up with the hope of a glorious career and a happy and prosperous life in the years to be.

The lesson that we learn from the varied experiences of our students on the night before the examination is that diligence and devotion to duty have their rewards. They are sweeter than the idle amusements with which many young men while away many precious days of student life. There is, in our country, an old saying that 'Study is Worship'. This is very true of every young scholar and every worshipper in the Temple of Learning.

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## COLLEGE LIBRARY

"The true university of our days," says Carlyle, "is a collection of books". This is more true of a college affiliated to a university in our days. It is not enough if a college has a number of lecturers and tutors to prepare its boys and girls for university examinations. Every college must encourage its students to read much more than the few books that are prescribed by the university. A student should surely have a fairly good knowledge of the subjects he is studying at college. And for this, he must spend a few hours in his college library everyday. If he attends the library, he will find what a variety of books there are on each and every branch of learning—literature, science, history, geography, and the like. Every new book he reads will teach him something more than what he knows, and make him feel an urge to read

and learn. So every college should have a good library, which is much more precious than lectures. It is only the reading of a fairly large number of good books that will broaden the outlook of a student and enlarge his bounds of knowledge. The more he reads, the more will he feel interested in the lectures delivered by his professors. He will also realize that he has yet many things to learn. He will feel, like Newton, that he is simply counting pebbles on the seashore. And he will also know the joys of sailing on the boundless ocean of knowledge, in quest of worlds unknown. This is the spirit which has always impelled many of our best students, and they have enriched the world by the fruits of their labours. Many great poets, artists, and scientists have been inspired by the treasures of knowledge preserved in the books on the shelves of libraries. That is why each and every college should build up an excellent and up-to-date library, which will be furnished with the best books and periodicals. These will induce even the most inattentive and half-hearted students to read and learn. And for this reason, they should receive generous help from the government. The government should make grants to colleges and help them to have decent libraries. Moreover, these libraries should be accommodated in airy, spacious, and well-lighted halls. Books are now mostly kept in moving shelves, sprayed from time to time, and preserved with naphthalene and other things, so that they may not be spoilt by moths or white ants. It is a truth that there is something stimulating in the very air of a library filled with good books. There is a charm, an attraction, in books neatly bound and arranged on rows of shelves from end to end of a spacious hall. The very sight of these books will tempt a young scholar to take one of them with him and read it at home. He will not feel this charm of books, if the shelves of his college library are filled with musty volumes that are as old as the days of Adam.

If a student gets into the habit of reading in a library, he will not be able to shake it off, and he will feel more and more interested in reading. After a few years, he will realize, in the words of Milton, that "a good book is the precious life-blood of a master-spirit, embalmed and treasured up on purpose of a life beyond life." When Bernard Shaw was sent to a Nursing Home during his last illness, he insisted on taking with him a small library. In our country, the great Khodabux Library in Patna, attracted Sir Jadunath Sarcar to the study of Muslim history. It was here that he read ancient manuscripts in original Persian and wrote his memorable histories of Aurangzeb and Shivaji. That is why every college should have a good library to encourage its students to read many useful and interesting books, so that they may do good not only to themselves but also to their country.

We hear of men in ancient times who hated reading and music. They were fanatics who would have no place in the civilized world in our day. Such men are really old-world curiosities, who have faded out of human memory.

We may conclude that Libraries and Common-Rooms are most essential to a college, where students go for higher studies. The duty of the teachers of colleges is not only to teach, but also to encourage the boys to read and look upon themselves as "devotees and worshippers in the Temple of Learning." Every college student should, like Southey's Scholar, say unto himself,

"My days among the dead are past.  
Around me I behold,  
Where'er my casual eyes are cast,  
The mighty minds of old.  
My never-failing friends are they  
With whom I converse day by day.

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## HOSTEL LIFE—ITS ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES

Our cities are the centres of higher education in these days. There are, no doubt, schools and colleges in the countryside. But they cannot make room for all the boys and girls who are receiving education. This is more so with the students who desire to go in for higher studies in the colleges affiliated to the university.

That is why many young men come to the cities for their education. The most promising and intelligent among them are attracted by the higher quality of teaching in the colleges in our cities. But the majority of these students have no homes of their own to live in. They have not even near relations in the city. So they put up in hostels attached to colleges, which are housed in large buildings. There are in them rooms with two or three seats. There are also very big rooms with four seats, and small ones with a single seat. These single-seated rooms are given to old boarders of the hostel, who read in the higher classes.

In every hostel, there is a superintendent who looks after the students. It is his duty to see that the boys read regularly, leave their beds early in morning, sleep in time, and do not waste long hours of the day in idle amusements. Indeed, one of the great defects of hostel life is that most of our boys waste their time in

going to cinema-shows, or attending theatres, where objectionable plays are often staged. There is no harm in playing healthy games, or seeing pictures that are innocent and amusing at the same time. But this cannot be said about most of the pictures that are displayed on the screen.

Again, in a hostel there are students from different parts of the country. They are not all alike in their dress and habits of life. This leads to trouble at times. But a strict superintendent may prevent these things, and teach the boys to look upon one another as brothers in the service of their beloved motherland.

In a hostel, a boy may feel, for some time, the want of home comforts and the love and care of his father and mother. He may miss them very much, when he is ill. But the love and tenderness of his fellow-students will cheer him up, and he will come round in a few days. Moreover, he may not relish the food which is served in these hostels, and long for the dishes to which he had been used at home. But the pleasure of living together with his fellow-students in a hostel will make him forget many inconveniences.

Hostel life has its discomforts and inconveniences, too, but it teaches our boys the value of self-help. Students living in a hostel have to dust their own books, cleanse their own rooms, wash their own clothes, and make their own beds. All these make them self-reliant and independent. This is an excellent habit which helps them greatly in life. A good student learns from his hostel-life that he has to read much more than what he has read in his college. And he also learns to read rapidly and independently. It is this which fosters in him a love of knowledge and the spirit of research—the spirit of knowing the unknown. Many a great scholar and scientist spent his early life in a hostel, and learnt the great lesson of self-help.

In a hostel the boys meet and discuss all sorts of interesting topics about arts, letters, poetry, music, and the most burning social and political problems of the day. It is these discussions that teach them to think, speak, and write about the things that interest them. Indeed, many of our leaders had their early training in hostels.

There is no denying that hostel-life has many advantages—advantages that are much greater than the disadvantages of a student's early days in a hostel. Last of all, it gives unto all our boys and girls the spirit of unity, service, and sacrifice.

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## THE VALUE OF DISCIPLINE

We think of discipline as something very cold, severe, and depressing. We feel as if it aims at curbing our freedom and robbing us of the joy of life. But our idea of discipline is really far from the truth.

Discipline means living an ordered life—a life regulated by rules. And these are rules or laws of conduct which have been laid down by the wisdom of ages. There are laws of the state, laws of society, and the laws of religion. The laws of society and religion are moral laws. We follow them out of our love for the good, and they are not legally binding on us. But the laws of the state must be obeyed, and we shall be punished if we violate them.

If any one feels that such a law is morally wrong, he can protest against it, and move the rulers of the land to mend or end it. But he must try every fair and peaceful means before he disobeys it. This was the ideal of truth that guided great patriots and thinkers like Mahatma Gandhi and Count Leo Tolstoy. The Mahatma appealed to the Government of South Africa, again and again, to allow the Indian settlers in the Transvaal to live on terms of friendship, amity, and equality with their white brethren. And it was only when he failed to move the authorities that he launched his campaign of Civil Disobedience in South Africa. It was, again, the same spirit that inspired him to lead a campaign of non-violent non-co-operation against the British government in India. And for a period of about thirty years, he lived a life of silent suffering against cruelty and injustice. Time and again, he fasted whenever his followers violated the discipline enjoined by his creed and mission in life. And his own life was strictly regulated by the laws of health and morality. He was very punctual in his habits, and did not waste a single moment of his valuable time. It is the same sense of duty and discipline that led him to East Bengal to preach the ideals of Hindu-Muslim unity. Indeed, his life teaches us that we must obey the laws of justice and morality in disobeying the law that violates the dictates of conscience.

Discipline does not mean bartering away the rights and liberties of man. A well-governed state is always well-disciplined. Discipline is the very breath of a democratic government. Abraham Lincoln has finely described democracy as the government of the people, by the people, and for the people. But the government of the people does not mean the despotic rule of the majority over the minority. In a word, every democratic government must protect the rights of the minorities, and guard against the tyranny of the majority. Even those who rule the state must obey the laws of the land. They must be prepared to work.

suffer, and even die for their country. It is this sense of discipline that, during the last World War, called away thousands of young men in England, America, and France to the battlefields of the East and the West. Many of them were wounded, maimed, or even killed in the war. Yet there was no wavering, no faltering, and no regrets when they rallied to the call of king and country.

Discipline is the backbone of military training. Every young soldier must be diligent, hardworking, and punctual in his habits. He will have to leap from his bed when the bugle is sounded in early morning, wash, and dress up in a few minutes, to attend the drill. Even when he is on the battlefield, he must obey the order of his commander even in peril of life. He must remember the words often heard in his school-days, 'Play up, play up, play the game.' It is this stern sense of discipline at the call of duty that is vividly described in Tennyson's 'Charge of the Light Brigade'. This is how the poet describes how six hundred gallant sons of England died at the command of their leader at the call of duty :

"Theirs not to make reply,  
Theirs not to reason why,  
Theirs but to do and die :  
Into the valley of Death  
Rode the Six Hundred."

And it is a strong sense of discipline that has inspired the heroes of our country to fight for the honour and the glory of the motherland. It is discipline, again, that thrilled the hearts of the heroines of Rajasthan when they leapt into the flames in defence of their honour and chastity.

Discipline never calls upon us to sacrifice our rights, liberties, and the innocent pleasures of life. It means that we have not only rights but also obligations to our country, our government, and our fellow-citizens of the state. In enjoying our liberty, we must not invade the liberty of others. We have, no doubt, the right to think, speak, and move about freely. But this does not mean that we shall make wild speeches that will lead to mob violence, or write things that will excite the worst passions of the crowd. We may move freely, but we must not encroach on other men's lands or possessions. In defending the sanctity of our hearths and homes, we must respect the sanctity of other men's homes as well. These are obligations that are imposed upon us by the time-old laws of morality and justice.

Discipline is also enjoined by all the religions of the world. But above all, it is the life and soul of education. It is a thing which should be strictly enforced in every home and every

educational institution. Youth is the seed-time of life. That is why the young student should be trained to be regular and diligent in his studies, punctual in his habits, and obedient to his parents and teachers. It has been said rightly that a student must look upon his studies as religion. He should not fritter away the most precious years of his life over things that are fit for maturer years. It has been often found that a student who is wanting in discipline can never enjoy the blessings of true knowledge, or shine in life. But discipline is not only called for in our schools and colleges but also on the playground, in the family, and all social, cultural, and political organizations. Every player must obey his captain on the cricket or football ground. It is the duty of the captain to select the team and lead it during the game, and the game itself must be played cleanly and fairly. No player should ever try to hit below the belt. He must play the game without thinking of the result. He may win or lose the game, but he can never tarnish his fair name.

At home every member should obey the head of the family. It is for him to manage the household, to allot their duties to the men and women in his care, and to see to their health and well-being. If this bond of discipline is broken, it will bring discord, jealousy, and unhappiness to the members of the family.

The bane of our social and political organizations is the dearth of honest workers and the rise of too many leaders in every sphere. This is seen during general elections when any number of mushroom parties and leaders come into the limelight. The result is that disorders break up party and public meetings everyday. What is worse, those who are disappointed in their ambitious designs, revolt against their parties and walk from one camp to another. But this is not the way to an ideal democracy or government of the people. In a democracy the majority rule over the minority. The minority has surely the right to express its views and protest against any action of the government. But when a decision has been taken, it should be obeyed by one and all. So those who love their country dearly should rally and stand by the reign of law and order in every sphere of national life.

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## THE PROBLEM OF EDUCATION

A man's career in life is moulded by his education. His education begins the very moment he is born and sees the light of day. The little child receives his first lessons from his mother's looks. He learns to love beauty and music, when he looks at smiling flowers and hears the birds singing from among the trees. He learns to speak when he hears men talking around him. And he is blessed with a wonderful memory that enables him to learn the language of his fathers.

But this is not all. The beauty and harmony of Nature teaches him to be sweet and graceful, and makes of him a silent poet. That is why a child feels the beauty of Nature more vividly than the men and women of the world round him. His heart leaps up with delight when he beholds the rainbow in the sky. He claps in joy when he sees the sun rising in the east, and hears the murmur of a little stream. When he grows a little older, he runs after the moon and the stars, and echoes the cry of the cuckoo hidden among the leaves of the trees. He looks in wonder at the sky, when it is tinged with the crimson rays of the setting sun. It is this idea which Wordsworth has brought out very finely in his 'Education of Nature'. There he speaks of the silent influence of Nature which moulded the life and character of Lucy. The wild fawn running across the lawn or springing up the mountainsides taught her to be lively and cheerful. She learnt to walk with dignity and graceful bearing, as she looked at the clouds floating in the sky. The willow bending with the breeze was to her an example of gracefulness and humility. Indeed, Wordsworth believes and preaches to all the world that Nature is the best teacher of man. In his 'Lines Written a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey', he tells us how greatly he enjoyed the beauty and harmony of Nature, with a thrill of wild delight, when he was a child. But with the years, it was Nature that enabled him to hear the still sad music of humanity, and see into the very life and soul of things. And he concludes his famous 'Ode on the Intimations of Immortality' with the lines :

"To me the meanest flower that blows can give  
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears."

In one of his poems, 'The Tables Turned', Wordsworth goes still further and exclaims, that

"One impulse from a vernal wood  
May teach you more of man,  
Of moral evil and of good  
Than all the sages can."

Moreover, if we think more deeply, we shall find that Nature is a fountain of inspiration, not only to the poet but also to the

scientist, the philosopher, and the man of action. It is the vastness and magnificence of Nature that led the philosophers of old to reflect on the greatness and glory of God, the Creator of the Universe. The dropping of an apple to the ground led Newton to the discovery of the Law of Gravitation. And by the deep and reverential study of Nature man has made wonderful discoveries and probed into the mystery of the universe. In a word, every seeker of knowledge must be a lifelong devotee of Nature. The education that we receive in schools and colleges is incomplete, unless it is enriched by the study and enjoyment of the glory and mystery of Nature.

Coming now to the problem of general education, we must try to understand its real meaning. Education has been broadly defined as the harmonious development of all the faculties of mind—moral, intellectual, and social. This ideal must always be kept in view in organizing our schools and colleges. We must remember that education is a sacred charge, not only to the teachers, but also to the parents and guardians of the boys and girls reading in our schools and colleges. For this we must take a keen and lively interest in their education. We must see to it that our educational institutions are manned by bands of intelligent, well-educated, and energetic teachers, who love their pupils and are prepared to give their heart to the work entrusted to them. This will never be possible if they are not well-paid, well-fed, and contented. And they must be not only well provided for, but also respected and welcomed in every home. Every teacher must win the love and regard of his pupils, and enjoy the friendship and hearty sympathy of their parents and guardians. He must be made to look upon himself as a friend and fellow-worker of all the people in the state, who are working for the progress of education.

There is also another thing which is urgently needed for the spread of healthy and enlightened education. Every school and college must be housed in commodious buildings, with a large compound. It is a sickening sight to see our boys and girls packed like sardines in narrow, dark, and dingy class-rooms for long hours a-day. This is not only injurious to their health, but also depressing to their spirits. It is our sacred duty to see that every single student of our schools and colleges has a healthy mind in a healthy body. The State, like all its citizens, has a duty in this respect. It must be prepared to spare funds for the rebuilding and reorganizing of the vast majority for our educational institutions, in the interests of the moral, intellectual, and physical development of our boys and girls.

It goes without saying that the duty of every teacher is to attract his pupils to the study of arts and sciences. It should

be borne in mind that a boy or girl must have elementary knowledge of a fairly large number of subjects, such as a foreign language, mathematics, history, geography, and science. He should also know the broad outlines of the constitution of the country he lives in. These are subjects which should be made compulsory at the School Final stage. But care should be taken to prescribe books which teach these things in the simplest way, and are not too learned and elaborate for boys of tender years. It makes one shudder when one looks at the text-books meant for boys and girls appearing at the School Final Examination. Surely the course of studies in almost all the subjects should be lightened, simplified, and humanized. And the study of these subjects should be enlivened with simple experiments and moving pictures on the screen. We should like to see a most interesting and important subject like Geography taught with the help of films—films which will enable the boys to see the Niagara Falls, the vast ranges of snow-capped mountains in the East and the West, the roaring seas, and flaming volcanoes. These will teach them more of Geography than the text-books prescribed by the Board of Secondary Education, and the lectures of their teachers in class.

Last of all, education must be a blending of study, recreation, and love of Nature—work with play and study with joy. Every college and school should see to it that the social life of its boys and girls receives as much attention as their studies. Every boy must have regular physical exercise, and he should also be encouraged to take part in debate, recitation, and dramatic entertainments. In other words, he must be cultured and refined in his tastes and manners. It has been said that the man who does not know at least three languages and has no taste for music or art, is indeed half-educated.

In our country, it was Rabindranath Tagore who tried, all his life, to follow this ideal in his international institution at Santiniketan. But this is an aspect of education which is almost ignored in most of our schools and colleges. And the result of it all is that, year after year, we are sending out to the world boys and girls, many of whom know little of art and music.

The greatest need of India, at the present moment, is to reorganize her educational institutions and train up boys and girls, who will be blessed with the light of knowledge and culture, and give it to their brothers and sisters in the years to be. Then and then alone shall we enjoy the blessings of real freedom.

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## BASIC EDUCATION

The vast majority of the people of India do not know how to read and write. This is one of the most serious problems of our country. For about two hundred years she was ruled by the British. They did not care for the poor and helpless men and women, who were lost in the darkness of ignorance and superstition. It was in the interest of the rulers of the land to keep these people in the dark. They thought that the spread of education among the masses would breed unrest, discontent, and dislike for foreign rule. That is why they did not try seriously to remove the misery, poverty, and ignorance of the vast millions of India. The leaders of our country tried, again and again, to induce the government to give free and compulsory primary education to the boys and girls of tender years. But they failed to move our rulers, and things remained as they were.

With the dawn of independence, vigorous efforts are being made for giving free and compulsory primary education to all the boys and girls of India. The problem is beset with many difficulties, the greatest of which is the lack of funds for carrying out a vast scheme like this in a country inhabited by about four hundred millions of men, women, and children. And the problem is becoming more and more difficult, every year, with the rapid increase of population. That is why Mahatma Gandhi thought out a plan for giving education to boys and girls of tender years, most of whom have been denied the light of knowledge. He realized that the grinding poverty of the people of India is at the core of all evils. It is for this, he used to think, that most of the children, born of poor parents, have to go without any education.

The principles of the scheme outlined by the Mahatma are very simple. In the first place, it aims at giving free and compulsory primary education to one and all. Secondly, it enjoins on each primary school to train its students in some craft which will serve local needs. It lays down clearly that the medium of instruction will be the mother-tongue of the boy or girl reading in any of these schools. And it will solve the problem of funds by selling the things made by the boys, or the vegetables grown by them on the school grounds. Lastly, English will not be a subject of study in these schools. The Mahatma felt that the present system of education is purely bookish and the method of teaching is unnatural, unsound, and out of date. It is unrelated to the needs of society, and has no social purpose before it.

The Mahatma thought that a nation can never prosper, unless all its people have at least some idea of the problems facing the country. For this every man living in the country should have some

idea of things that he ought to know. He should learn the elements of arithmetic, history, geography, and science. He must learn how to read books, and express his ideas in simple words. Indeed, democratic government, 'government of the people, by the people, and for the people', is founded on this principle. The Reform Bill of 1832 in England gave to every member of the middle class the right to vote. But in those days, the vast majority of the people of England were uneducated. That is why one of the members of the parliament observed on that historic occasion, "We must educate our masters". Here in India, we have established a democratic government. This is the ideal of the Indian Constitution, in spite of its many failings. And for the success of this glorious ideal, we must carry the light of knowledge to every home. In a word, we must wake up at once, and speed up our programme of elementary education with all our will, energy, and determination.

The idea of training the little boys in a craft is good. Every boy will take a good deal of interest in learning a craft. And in doing so, he will also learn the elements of science and other subjects. In other words, the education given to him will be craft-centred. But it has one great defect. It advises the schools to teach only those crafts that will meet local needs. It may be that a little boy or girl may not feel interested in a craft which will meet these needs alone, and nothing else. Variety is the mother of enjoyment. This is true also in the sphere of education. The little learner should be allowed to make his choice among a variety of crafts. Moreover, there are many boys and girls who are good at drawing. They should surely be allowed to learn the elements of painting. We shall make a great blunder if the education we give to our boys and girls robs them of the joy of life. They must work and play and sing in the fulness of heart. Compelling each and everyone of them to learn the same craft is to turn them into the wheels of a machine. This is a system of education which has not been found useful in any country of the world. This is not the ideal of the Kindergarten system in Germany, and the Montessori system of Italy. It resembles, more or less, the factory schools of Russia.

We now come to another aspect of basic education. It calls on the schools to teach their boys and girls through the medium of their mother-tongue. This is quite right in principle and will certainly improve the quality of teaching. But there is no reason why boys, who are eight or nine years old, should not try to learn something of a foreign language in the earliest years of life. It has been said that, in a civilized country, every educated man should know at least three languages. He must not only learn his own language fairly well, but also two other languages besides his own. A student of our country should try to

learn a bit of English, and a language which is spoken in some other state of India. The medium of instruction will, no doubt, be the mother-tongue. But there is no reason why he should not learn the alphabet and the elementary principles of English grammar and composition. This will not be a burden on him. He will learn these things easily with the help of his vigorous memory. It will also have the charm of variety. And when he leaves school and joins his college for higher studies, this will help him to learn more thoroughly the richest language of the world—a language spoken and written by vast millions of men all over the earth.

The last feature of this scheme is most unusual and unworkable. It attempts to solve the problem of finance by a single stroke of the pen. Mahatma Gandhi tried to solve the cloth problem of India by calling on every man to spin his own cloth. He preached to them the cult of the *Charka* or the spinning wheel. But this has been found impossible and, but for the cotton mills that have sprung up in every part of the country, most of our people would have to go naked, or wander about in dirty, torn, and tattered rags. Similarly, it is simply impossible to pay the salaries of the teachers and meet the other expenses of a school, with the money raised by selling the things made by the boys of the school itself. But our government have now realized that this cannot be done, and they have made large grants for meeting the running expenses of these schools. And they have also made arrangements for sports, music, and dancing.

It is good to teach a boy to be clean and tidy, to love religion, and learn self-help. It is also a good thing for him to work with his own hands, try to grow more food by planting trees, work as a volunteer in times of flood and famine, and nurse the sick in poor homes. But he must also cultivate the fine arts, and prepare for higher education, if he is intelligent, studious, and hardworking.

This is the ideal with which Rabindranath founded his institution at Santiniketan—an institution which has now developed into a great university, and a seat of international culture. The poet encouraged the boys and girls of his school to take to the arts and crafts that appealed to their tastes. He also made it a rule that they must work with their own hands as much as possible, wash their own clothes, make their own beds, dust their own rooms, and do many other things, like tilling the soil or planting trees. But he always realized that the ideal of life is not simply to earn one's bread. It means also the refining of a man's tastes, and inspiring him to love things of beauty that are a joy forever.

It has been said by some of the ardent champions of basic

education that we have so long made a fetish of books. It may be so. But it is not desirable that the little boys and girls should learn merely crafts and manual labour, to the exclusion of all other things worth learning. We shall be wrong if we fail to realize that our country will be able to hold her head high among the nations of the world, only when her learning, culture, arts, crafts, and industries will be developed, side by side. And it is this that will bring peace, enlightenment, and everlasting happiness to the people of our ancient land.

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### WOMEN'S EDUCATION

Education is the crying need of the day, and a great blessing to all men and women. There are people of old-world ideas, who think that education is meant for men, and not for women. Half a century ago, there was hardly a lady graduate in Bengal. In Calcutta Bethune College was opened with only two pupils on its roll. And they were the two daughters of Pandit Madan Mohan Tarkalankar, who was a professor of the college, of which Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar was the first Secretary. Even long years after this event, the condition of women's education in our country was very miserable indeed. The number of girl students was, no doubt, increasing from year to year. But no one ever dreamt that women's education would become so popular in the years to be.

Today the problem of women's education has become very keen. Such is the vast multitude of girl students, coming out of our schools every year, that it is very difficult to find room for them in the colleges affiliated to the university. Bethune College, Lady Brabourne College, Loreto House, and Gokhale Memorial Girls' College are meant only for girl students. But there the authorities can admit only a small number of students. It is not only the question of teaching these girls that is troubling the public mind now-a-days, but also the problem of housing them in healthy surroundings. That is why many a college in Calcutta has opened a Women's Department for giving higher education to our girl students. But they are also faced with the problem of finding ample accommodation for these girls.

At Presidency and Scottish Church College, there are facilities for co-education. It is doubtful whether this system is working well. Everyone needs the light of knowledge. But we should bear in mind that the ideas, habits, and customs of our country are different from those of the West.

This vast progress in women's education in our country proves that education is a blessing to man and woman alike. A woman must be educated and enlightened like a man. Culture

and refinement will make her sweeter, nobler, and purer. We have often seen that uneducated women are extremely jealous of each other. They will often quarrel over petty things and raise a tempest in a tea-pot. But a really educated woman will almost always be more tolerant and liberal in her ideas. From her studies of history and literature, she will think of the devotion, patriotism, and heroic self-sacrifice of the Rajput women of old. She will think of the greatness and glory of Luxmi Bai, the Ranees of Jhansi. She will think of Florence Nightingale and her labour of love in the Crimea. And it is these things that purify, ennable, and sweeten the days of her life on earth.

There are, no doubt, glorious exceptions here and there. We have, among us, ladies of the old school, who are loved and revered for their piety, simplicity, kindness, and charity. But women like them are very rare in these hard times. So there can be no doubt that women must be educated in the highest interests of the country. There is no truth in the old world idea that women should always keep within the four walls of their homes. These men feel that the one single duty of a woman is to serve her husband and nurse her children. But this is surely a wrong idea, and the sooner we get rid of it, the better.

We cannot deny that there are some kinds of knowledge which are more congenial to women than to men. Women, as we have seen, are eminently fit for the study of poetry, music, painting, and fine arts. They are beautiful by right divine, and they have a very natural taste for things that are refined and graceful. That is why there are many great poets, artists and novelists among women. Who can ever forget the love-lyrics of Elizabeth Barrett Browning, or the deeply religious poems of Christina Rossetti ? George Elliot, Charlotte Bronte, and Jane Austen are powerful novelists, whose works are read with delight even to this day. But here again there are exceptions. We have distinguished women-scientists like Madame Curie, and rulers of realms, like Abalya Bai, Rizia Begum, and Queen Victoria.

But we must concede that science, engineering, the art of carrying on a government, and many other things depend on hard labour and infinite patience. And these are things that are not generally suited to the tastes or talents of women. But there is a sphere of life in which woman is supreme. She is the queen of her home. Her first and foremost duty is to give the light of love and devotion to a happy home.

Women are our earliest teachers. They are to bring up the children in the nursery. They have to give these little ones the first lessons in reading and writing. They are to teach their children how to respect their parents and love their neighbours. And they are to make the lives of these little ones pleasant and

cheerful by love and tenderness. Newton could never have been so great without the loving care of his grandmother, and the life of Napoleon Bonaparte was deeply influenced by his mother. Shakespeare imbibed his love of Nature by wandering along the banks of the Avon with his mother, and watching the beauty of flowers, ferns, and rippling streams. Indeed, the life of a child is largely moulded by his mother, and every great man owes much of his success in life to the care of his mother. That is why every girl should be carefully educated, so that she may be a good mother to her children and a good wife to her husband. And in preparing for motherhood, she must not only read but also learn such useful things as cooking, needle-work, and gardening. To a woman, all these things are as useful as reading and writing.

We should bear in mind that woman's education is as essential as man's. But the education she receives can never be complete, unless she knows how to rule over her home and rear up children for the good of the state. Her education should be a blending of the finer graces of art and literature, and the spirit of service which is the choicest gift of God to woman.

There are women who think that they are equal to men in every sphere. They fight for their rights and liberties and, at times, they indulge in acts of violence and disorder. But to our mind, they are not fit to be women. They are freaks of nature without the refinement, grace, sweetness and tenderness of women. Our girls should always remember that the end of a woman's life is love and service.

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### CO-EDUCATION

The spread of women's education in our country has created many problems. One of these is the question of co-education. In Europe and America boys and girls mix freely in society, schools, and colleges. That is why co-education has been going on in the West from very early times. Even a great religious reformer like Martin Luther was in favour of co-education, and it was first introduced into England and Scotland. In America it is very popular, and it is so in most of the European countries.

But the problem is not so easy in our country. Here the manners and customs of the people are different. In our country boys and girls are allowed to read together during the first few years of their career in schools. They read together in the missionary schools up to the age of twelve, and after that the boys have to join schools, which are meant only for them. But it is not so in Europe and America, and there may be good reasons for it. In our country women are never encouraged to mix freely with

men. They have to remain in their homes, attending to their duties in the family. They may not even appear before, or speak with some of their relations. And to mix or talk with a friend, with no family ties, was unthinkable only a few years ago. Some of our people rigidly enforce the *purdah* system, and their women are rarely allowed to go out, or speak with their relations. Even when they travel in trains or steamers, they have to wear cloaks to hide their faces. We feel that this rigidity of social custom—this time-old practice of separating men from women—has done more harm than good to our country.

Women enjoyed the blessings of freedom in ancient India. After that we came under the influence of Muslim rule. Muslim women were not allowed to mix with men, and they had to live behind the *purdah*. In course of time, this system influenced even the Hindus of Northern India for more reasons than one. The result of this rigid distinction is that, in our country, and indeed in most oriental countries, women have been denied the light of knowledge for centuries. But these ideas have been changed with the change of times, and there are now many schools and colleges for co-education in India.

At any rate, we should be more careful about introducing co-education in our country. Little children, boys, and girls, may read together. And, the more advanced students—students who have graduated and reached years of discretion—may carry on their studies with women in the same college and the same class. But we should certainly see whether this may be safely tried in the higher classes of schools, or the undergraduate classes of the colleges affiliated to the university. In such cases, we should keep a strict eye on our students, and see that they behave decently. Co-education is not an evil thing. It is an ideal system but, in our country, it should be carried on with great care and vigilance.

With the spread of education and the refinement of feelings and emotions among our young men and women, a time will surely come when co-education will be the order of the day. That will be the time when the social barriers between the sexes will break down, and young men and women will study and work together for the good of their motherland. They will learn to respect and look upon each other as brothers and sisters.

There are among us men of the old school, who think that the sphere of woman's education is entirely different from man's. They think that women have no reason to mix with men, who are not related to them. Some of them, who are a little more liberal, will allow that women should read at home under the guidance of old and experienced tutors, and they have no need

of going to schools and colleges, or reading in the same class with boys. But they forget that this is a thing which was unknown in ancient India, and it is absent even now in Southern India. It is a vicious system, which stimulates the sex-impulse and denies to the women of our country the light of knowledge, and the blessings of freedom. Those of our women who are highly educated and move freely in society, have rendered great service, not only to the society but also to the land of their birth. There were great women in ancient India like Khana, Lilabati, Luxmi Bai, and Rezia Begum. There was, till the other day, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, who had shed the lustre of her poetry and romance on the East and the West. There are now, among us, Mrs. Vijay Luxmi Pandit and many other great women who have distinguished themselves by their knowledge, culture, and selfless devotion to the motherland. Some of them have even suffered and died for the honour, glory, and freedom of India. They would never have been able to give to us the light of their learning, culture, and patriotism, if they had been confined within the four walls of their homes, and never allowed to think, work, and suffer with their brothers in faith.

We may conclude that co-education is a noble ideal. We hope that the time is not far off when, with the progress of knowledge and culture, we shall be able to give equal rights and liberties to our sisters in every sphere of life—arts, industries, social service, and education.

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### FREE AND COMPULSORY PRIMARY EDUCATION

The British ruled over India for about two hundred years. They did many good things for the people of our country. They gave us the blessings of law, order, and facilities of travelling by railways, steamships, motor-cars, and aeroplanes. Moreover, it was they who, for the first time in our country, brought about a feeling of unity among the many races and peoples of India. They founded universities, schools, and colleges for the spread of western education. And it must be said to their credit that western education has inspired the leaders of our country with the highest ideals of liberty, and welded all the peoples of India into a nation.

But the British did very little for educating the vast millions of this great subcontinent. It is a shame that, during two hundred years of British rule in India, only ten to fifteen per cent of the people were found to be literate. This means, more often than not, that they could sign their names, instead of giving

thumb impressions. The leaders of India, in those days, were right in crying down the rulers of the land for their callous indifference to the problem of primary education. The late Mr. Gopal Krishna Gokhale pleaded eloquently for free and compulsory primary education for the boys and girls of this country. He was followed in this noble mission by the late Srinivasa Shastri and many other leaders of thought in this country. And, year after year, the Indian National Congress passed resolutions for the introduction of free and compulsory primary education in our country. That is why when India became free, it was expected that the National Government would take very early and energetic steps to see that every boy and girl in India learns at least the elements of reading, writing, arithmetic, and science. Mahatma Gandhi also pleaded warmly for the spread and encouragement of basic education, which means primary education centred round a craft. His idea was that, along with the elements of language, arithmetic, and science, every boy must learn some craft which will meet the local needs of the people. In a word, he was in favour of a system of education that would teach our boys and girls to earn their living by working with their own hands, by learning some useful craft. He held that the running expenses of these schools would be met by the sale of their own products, such as the things made by the boys and girls who have been trained in a craft which is popular in the country round. But things are not what they seem. It is simply impossible for the boys and girls of a school to read their lessons, grow their own food, spin their own cloth, and learn a craft at one and the same time. However much they may try, they cannot produce so many things as will meet the running expenses of the school by selling them in the market. That is why the Government of India are now trying to adjust the original scheme of basic education to the changing needs of the time.

At any rate, primary education is the need of the hour. It is, we think, time for the Government to set up a primary school in every village. In these schools the students will learn the elements of language, arithmetic, agriculture, and science. They may also learn some arts and crafts suited to their tastes. But they must be trained in such a way that they may be able to read in Secondary Schools, when they reach the age of twelve or so. In other words, we must see that every boy and girl reads up to the School Final Standard. This means that we must not send him away to the fields at the age of twelve, without giving him the opportunity of learning many things he ought to know, before he starts on a career in life. Let him be a cultivator, a carpenter, or a fisherman if he will. But if he has passed at least his School Final Examination, he will do much better in his trade.

This is a truth which is realized in western countries. In England, Gladstone passed the Elementary Education Act of 1870. By this Act education of all children up to fourteen was made compulsory, and popularly elected School Boards were set up to supervise it. At first the parents had to contribute something for their children's education. But twenty-one years later, in 1891, primary education was made free. And we are still far away from the time when primary education in our country will become free and compulsory. The Constitution declares that education will be made free and compulsory in ten years. But, judging at the present rate of progress, it is extremely doubtful whether this promise will be fulfilled. We must remember, however, that primary education is not worth the name, if it be not co-ordinated with Secondary Education. In a word, primary schools must be stepping-stones to Secondary Schools.

Yet, the entire burden of this great reform must not be thrown on the shoulders of the government. The people of India have their duty as well. We have many princes, commercial magnates, and great industrialists who must contribute liberally for the success of this noble scheme. And the common people too must give their mite for the good of their children. If everyone of us stretches his helping hand and gives something for this noble cause, we are sure to succeed. In a word, all of us must take a vow to make primary education free, compulsory, and universal, within the target date, ten years from the beginning of the Constitution.

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### VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

There are very few men on earth who are born rich. For one rich man, there are thousands who have to work hard to earn a living. And in doing so, every man must have a vocation—a trade, business, or profession—by which he may be able to keep his head above water. So in every civilized country there are institutions for specialized training in different arts, crafts, industries, and professions. There are also schools for training young men for railways, airways, the army, and the navy. And those who come out of these institutions are naturally preferred to young men who have no training at all. That is why, with the progress of civilization and rapid advance in trade, commerce, and industries, there is a growing demand for trained hands everywhere.

In these days, an untrained man is of no help at all in mills, factories, workshops, printing presses, iron works, mercantile firms, or anywhere. Such a man will be of no help if there be a breakdown of the machinery in a workshop, or if there is a gross mistake in the keeping of accounts.

In highly industrial countries like England, America, Germany, or Japan, very few young men go to the university for higher education. After leaving school, they join some institution in which they can receive practical training in a subject that is suited to their tastes and abilities. A student who has come out with a school-leaving certificate may join a technical school where he may learn how to handle machines. He may also enter a school of commerce where he may learn book-keeping, accountancy, business organization, and commercial arithmetic. He may, as well, join a school for military training, if he has a good physique and enjoys good health. There are also, in these countries, young men who are trained for the navy, the air force, or mercantile marine. It is needless to multiply instances, as it is quite clear that there are many avenues of employment in these industrially advanced countries.

In the West, the students who are either rich or exceptionally intelligent join the universities to qualify for the learned professions, and take to the study of Literature, Law, History, Philosophy, or Fine Arts. But some of them go in for vocational education of a much higher standard, such as Law, Medicine, and Engineering. However, the vast majority of young men turn to vocational education for a living.

It is a pity that, up till now, vocational education has made little progress in our country. There are only a few institutions for vocational training in India, such as the Engineering Colleges at Sibpore, Jadavpur, Gorakhpur, Banaras, and Roorkee. There are also the National Metallurgical Laboratory at Jamshedpur, and College of Engineering and Technology at Kharagpur. There are, again, the National Chemical Laboratory at Poona, the National Physical Laboratory in Delhi, the Central Fuel Research Institute in Bihar, Drug Research Institute at Lucknow, the Agricultural Institute at Pusa, and the Central Glass and Ceramic Research Institute in Calcutta. We have, moreover, the Chittaranjan Locomotive Works in West Bengal, the Hindusthan Shipyard at Vizagapatam, the Penicillin Factory at Bangalore, the Iron and Steel Company at Jamshedpur, and many others. Over and above these, there are well-staffed Medical Colleges in Calcutta, Patna, Banaras, Lucknow, Bombay, Madras, and elsewhere. Here, in West Bengal, we have the Berhampore Silk Institute, the Serampore Textile School, the Gun and Shell Factory at Cossipore, and the Metal, Steel, and Rifle Factory at Ishapore.

But many of these are meant for vocational education of a higher order. And the vast masses of school-leaving boys may take training in the five government-recognized technical schools that teach something and award diplomas. Besides them, there are about two hundred schools in this line in West Bengal that receive grants from the Government. But they are very poorly equipped, and merely keep up a show of training in order to receive government grants. And in their early years, our boys may also be trained for some craft in the Basic Schools started by the Government. But it is well known that most of these schools have not been able to fulfil the high hopes built on them.

The great defect of Secondary Schools in our country is that they have no facilities for practical training in any subject that will be useful to our boys in earning their livelihood. They lay more stress on theories than on practice. That is why, along with class-work, the students should be allowed to take practical training in a firm or factory. We are told that, in Soviet Russia, there are training classes attached to mills, factories, and agricultural farms.

But we must never forget that there should be a suitable groundwork of knowledge for every young man who goes in for vocational education. He must at least pass his School Final Examination, before he receives practical training in any subject that will enable him to earn his bread. Without an elementary knowledge of a number of subjects, such as the general principles of language, arithmetic, geography, and science, he will not be able to learn anything fairly well.

India is now a free country. She can never prosper and hold her own against the other nations of the world without an army of engineers, technicians, artisans, and builders. And for this it is the sacred duty of the people and the government of India to start a network of well-equipped, well-managed, and efficient technical schools all over the country. They will give bread and employment to millions of young men, and bring peace and prosperity to our ancient land.

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### TECHNICAL EDUCATION

We are often told that India was once a land flowing with milk and honey. Her lofty mountain ranges, large navigable rivers, dense forests, and her beautiful lakes, hills, and streams made her one of the most prosperous countries of the world. But the times are now out of joint. Her vast and evergrowing popu-

boys may have some idea of these things before they leave school. This does not mean that they will neglect the other subjects of study. As in England and other great countries, every boy must pass his School Final Examination, so that he may go out to the world with at least some knowledge of language, mathematics, history, geography, and the elements of science and mechanics. He will then be able to carry on higher studies in technology or any other subject of his choice smoothly, and do good not only to himself but also to his motherland.

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### FOREIGN TRAVEL AS A MEANS OF EDUCATION

Few things in life are more lively and delightful than travelling in foreign countries. It enables us to see new lands, with all the wealth of their beautiful scenery and works of art. It helps us to come into contact with people, whose manners, customs, and ways of life differ from ours. We have many good things to learn from them, and they may as well take lessons from us. We may, for example, go to England or America. There we shall meet with men and women who are very smart and active in their habits. They are not slow and indolent like most of us, and make the best use of their time. That is why their standard of life is much higher, and they have made wonderful progress in science, literature, trade, commerce, arts, and industries. We should learn from them to be strong, healthy, and active. And they may learn from us to love the blessings of peace, religion, and philosophy.

All the great men of India, in the past or the present, have loved peace and the consolations of religion and philosophy. There are, no doubt, among us great patriots, who have lived, toiled and died for their country. They have braved the wrath of foreign rulers, wandered among lonely mountains, and even plunged into the roaring sea, not only to save themselves, but also to work and fight for their country's freedom. Such was the life lived by Subhash Chandra Bose, who crossed the wild mountains in the north-west of India, made his way to Kabul, and thence to Italy and Germany. And from Germany he flew to Japan, and later sailed to Singapore and Saigon. At Singapore he organized the Indian National Army, which invaded India. He failed in his noble mission, but it must be said to his glory that he hoisted the standard of freedom on Indian soil. That is why he commanded the love, respect, and obedience of all classes of people — Hindus, Sikhs, Muslims, and indeed men of every race and religion in India.

We must concede that his selfless and untiring labours in the cause of his country were due not only to the influence of his culture and education, but also to his long wanderings in the East and the West. During these travels he had the privilege of coming into contact with many nations of the world, enjoying the varied scenery of the lands they live in, and studying their men, manners, and governments. It is this that made him realize that a true government must be founded on the love and good will of the people living in its care. This is indeed a great training for a leader of men and the commander of an army of liberation.

But this is not all. The West is far more advanced in science than the East. Even the very best students of science in our country cannot complete their education here in India. They have to study in foreign countries to learn many things, and form an idea of the latest developments in science. In Physics, Chemistry, Medicine, and Engineering, we have yet to learn much from the greatest scientists of England, America, France, Germany, and Modern Russia. That is why almost all our eminent men of science have been in foreign lands to develop, improve, and perfect their knowledge of science and arts.

Foreign travel not only increases the wealth of our knowledge of science, but also of arts and letters. Some of our best painters and artists have been in Italy, and many of our famous men of letters have spent years of life in foreign countries. A student of English Literature can never do justice to his studies, unless he has acquired a fairly general knowledge of Latin, Greek, French, and German. He will never be able to probe into the mystery of this wonderful literature without learning the languages which have contributed to its growth and development from age to age. But even this is not enough. He should travel in these lands to be able to appreciate the wonderful descriptions of natural scenery and historic cities of Europe in the pages of Shakespeare, Byron, Shelley, or Wordsworth. The richness, variety, and wonderful beauties of the poetry of Rabindranath are due, not only to his incomparable genius, but also to the influence of foreign travel on his eternally young and impressionable mind. Rabindranath would never have been so great and so liberal in his thoughts and ideals, but for his wide travels in the East and the West. His contact with men of all nations widened his outlook on life, and made him preach, all life long, the ideal of liberty, equality, and fraternity among the men of the world. Indeed the West appreciated the innate nobility of his soul and the beauty and sublimity of his poetry by awarding him the Nobel Prize in Literature. It is also the influence of western culture that instilled into him that love of liberty which led him to raise his voice of protest during the Punjab Rebellion of 1920, and resign

his knighthood as a 'badge of shame and dishonour'. And it is this which enabled him to shake off all prejudices and forget the barriers of rivers, seas, and mountains. That is how he learned to love, esteem, and admire great men of the East and the West, and looked upon himself as a citizen of the world.

### THE EDUCATIONAL VALUE OF BROADCASTING

The radio is one of the most wonderful inventions of modern science. We can hear the speeches made and the songs sung by men in other countries through the radio.

It is also used for broadcasting news and views. During the Second World War, the radio was used by England, France, Germany, Japan, the United States of America, and many other powers for telling the world that each and every one of them was fighting for the sacred principles of right and justice. In these messages, they claimed splendid victories over their enemies, and disowned defeats. In times of peace, the radio is often used by the government for giving messages and announcing their policy and line of action on problems of national importance.

There are many eminent men who do not like to face the music of the audience. They have the heart to feel, but not the voice to speak. They prefer the radio as a medium of their thoughts and ideals. And through the radio they can come into contact with men and women in every country of the world. Indeed, the radio is one of the most glorious achievements of wireless telephony..

But the radio is also used for giving world-news, telling interesting stories to children, and giving lessons to them. It is again the medium, through which great scientists, eminent educationists, and learned politicians speak on subjects in which they are interested. And the greatest advantage of the radio is that you can hear it from every place in any corner of the world. You need not go to schools and colleges or the lecture-halls of the university for learning these things. You can profit by them at home or the house of a friend.

Carlyle has told us that the true university of our days is a collection of books. This was, no doubt, true in his day. But in modern times, the radio is a more powerful and interesting medium of instruction to the vast masses of men and women in every country. On the radio you can hear the voice of a speaker with his accents, intonation, and modulation. It is the voice of a good

speaker that gives life and music to his words. But you cannot, unless you are fairly advanced in knowledge, feel the charm of the printed word. To most of us, there is no charm in cold print. This is true of the great majority of learners, who are fit for having only a general idea of the things in which they are interested. For advanced study and research, a man must give his days and nights to reading, thinking, or making experiments in the laboratory. But above all, the radio is the greatest friend and teacher of the teeming millions of India. That is why it is a great blessing to a country that believes in the government of the people, by the people, and for the people.

Lastly, the radio has linked all the countries of the world in the East and the West. Those who listen to broadcasting feel that they are all brothers in faith. Their thoughts and ideals, and hopes and aspirations, are very much the same. In a word, it awakens in them a deep and ardent faith in the fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man. There are cruel, ambitious, and selfish men in every country, who are trying to turn the hearts of men away from the paths of love, truth, and justice. They are teaching the people the ideals of a narrow, selfish, and deluding patriotism. It is these men who lead the world into wars, and plunge it into a sea of blood. But the time will surely come when men will rise above all these, and unite in one single bond of love and charity. And to this end, broadcasting will be one of the most powerful friends of humanity in the years to be.

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### MILITARY TRAINING FOR INDIANS

The world is now passing through a crisis in the history of mankind. At the end of the First World War, President Wilson of America organized the League of Nations. The object of this great league was to put an end to wars, and make the world safe for democracy. With this end in view, the leaders of the great European nations preached the blessings of peace and liberty. They called upon all their members to reduce armaments and devote themselves to the cause of peace. It was thought that the world had a great and glorious future before it.

But that was not to be. Secret preparations for a war on a more gigantic scale were going on all the time. In Japan and Germany armies were trained and organized. Arms, ammunitions, and many new weapons of destruction were being forged in the workshops of Germany and Japan. Mammoth warships and new-model aeroplanes were built in their thousands in

Germany. In a word, Hitler rearmed and reorganized Germany on a formidable scale. The fear of the growing power and influence of Russia led England and America to sympathize with Germany. But France was suspicious. She built the famous Maginot Line to guard her frontiers against Germany, and Germany built the Sigfried Line to keep off France. In the meantime, Italy grabbed Abyssinia, and Japan occupied Manchuria and invaded China. The League of Nations could not prevent all this. It simply raised a feeble voice of protest, which was unheeded and defied by Italy, Germany, and Japan. At last Germany invaded Poland, and the Second World War broke out. With the outbreak of this terrible war, the League of Nations tumbled down like a house of cards.

Here in India Mahatma Gandhi preached the blessings of peace and non-violence. But inspite of all his efforts, India was dragged into this war and tied to the chariot wheels of the United Kingdom. This was in the midst of her great struggle for freedom against England. The result was that Indian cities were filled with English and American troops. Burma and Malaya were invaded and conquered by the Japanese. Many historic cities, towns, and villages of Burma were harried and destroyed, and men, women, and children rushed to India for safety. But India became the target of Japanese air-raids, soon after, and men fled for safety to the villages. India was unarmed and helpless. The leaders of India made powerful speeches, and urged on our young-men to rise and fight for their freedom, and the liberty of men all over the world.

The Second World War and its aftermath have taught us that military training is absolutely essential to India. It is easy to speak of peace and non-violence. But it is not so easy to defend the homeland without arms, ammunitions, and air power. This is a truth which was realized, first of all, by Subhash Chandra Bose, the pride of Bengal and glory of India. He baffled the British rulers of India, crossed over to Afghanistan, and flew in an Italian plane to Europe. From there he went to Japan. And at the call of his motherland, he sailed to Singapore, where he organized the Indian National Army. It must be said to his glory that, against heavy odds, he led an Indian army through Burma and the wilds of Assam, and hoisted the standard of freedom on Indian soil. He failed in fulfilling his dream. But his failure was more glorious than victory. It is he who made the British feel that they could not rule over India for long, against the wishes of her people. There were risings in the army and the navy, and grave discontent among the forces of law and order. That is why the British resolved to leave India, after giving a parting kick in the creation of Pakistan.

The problems that have arisen out of the partition of India have made us realize, all the more, that we must be prepared to defend our hearths and homes at all times. We realized it all the more deeply during the tribal raids on Kashmir. And we felt it keenly during the police action in Hyderabad against the terrible atrocities of the Rajakars. Even now we are living under a sense of insecurity against hostile neighbours, financed and encouraged by England and America. America's military aid to Pakistan is the latest example of this foreign intrigue. Moreover, the South East Asia Treaty Organization and Baghdad Pact have made things still worse for India, and indeed all other nations pledged to peace. Even the United Nations Organization is nothing but a clique of the great European powers, who are dallying with the fate of millions of men and women in Kashmir. All these are facts which are too glaring to be ignored. And we must teach our young men to be strong in heart and deed. They must look upon military training as a part of their education.

We have our University Training Corps. This was formed in the wake of the First World War. But it was, more or less, a body of young men, clad in military uniform, to parade on the maidan and salute the rulers of the land. But now-a-days, this corps has been thoroughly reorganized, and we hope that it will gain in strength and number in the years to be.

During British rule, we were often told that the Bengalees were not a fighting race. This was due to the spread of culture and education among the Bengalees. The great men of Bengal were the leaders of thought in India, and pioneers of the national struggle for freedom. That is why the late Gopal Krishna Gokhale once observed, "What Bengal thinks today, all India thinks tomorrow." But the times are now changed, and Bengal has lost her pride of place in the councils of India. It was the youth and chivalry of Bengal that raised the standard of revolt against the British rulers of India under the leadership of Sri Arabinda Ghosh. Many of them fought and died for the freedom of India. And the greatest among these heroes of India was Subhas Chandra Bose. After his glorious achievements, the shame of cowardice can no longer be laid at the door of Bengal.

It is clearly the duty of India and Bengal to organize our young men into a vast army of liberation. It is this army which will teach all men the value of discipline. It is this army which will give them strength, hope, and courage. And it is this army that will, more than anything else, bring about the unity of all the peoples of India—Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Parsis, and Christians. This was the miracle worked by Subhas Chandra when he organized his Indian National Army. The feeling of unity and spirit of patriotism, awakened by Subhas Chandra

Bose, are the choicest blessings of military training. Where is the Indian who does not feel proud of Brigadier Osman, who died gallantly for the freedom of Kashmir? Where is the Indian who does not love and cherish the memory of those great patriots—Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs—who fought, shoulder to shoulder, for the liberation of India?

Let us, therefore, resolve to be worthy sons and soldiers of Mother India.

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### HOW SCIENCE RELIEVES HUMAN SUFFERINGS

Science has worked wonders on the earth, the sea, and in the air. We feel the power of science in every sphere of human activity. And we feel the influence of science all the more deeply when it relieves human sufferings.

It has lightened the burdens of life of the common man. There was a time when, in India, men had to travel hundreds of miles on foot to reach a holy place. That is why man had to suffer patiently and surrender to the Divine Will, when he was in great trouble. He suffered from many diseases and died without food, treatment, and nursing. Many deadly diseases, such as phthisis, cancer, cholera, and small-pox were supposed to be incurable. But now-a-days, wonder medicines like penicillin, streptomycin, chloromycetin, and the like, have cured some of the most terrible diseases, from which man suffers in every part of the world. Surgery, radio-therapy, and deep X-ray have cured many cases of cancer, and given light to the eyes of men who suffer from cataract, glaucoma, and other diseases of the eye. Even mental diseases are yielding to treatment.

Science has made travel easier and much quicker than before. In the cities almost every home is lighted by electricity. There are heaters to keep men warm in cold, and washers and ironers. There are also electric ovens for cooking in a short time. Moreover, even rural areas are now served by electricity. Many mills and factories are worked by electric power, and provide employment to thousands of men in each locality. Modern methods of agriculture, such as fertilizing the soil and using tractors, are improving the quality and quantity of crops, and bringing food to millions of starving men and women. Even the grinding of wheat and rice is done by electricity in many places.

Science has given us many kinds of cheap conveyance, like buses, trams, and electric railways. They bring thousands of

men to a city from the suburbs and give them work. Even in the city, poor people attend their offices, at a long distance, by bus or tramcar. How much men are inconvenienced and work suffers may be seen on days of strikes, that are often incited and organized by a class of wily politicians.

It is science that has made it possible for our engineers to dig canals, erect dams, and adopt many other means of irrigating cornfields and enriching their soil. Many waste lands have been turned into smiling cornfields. The deserts of California have been filled with fruits, flowers, and vegetables of all kinds with water drawn from rivers hundreds of miles away. It is science that has harnessed roaring waterfalls to produce cheap electricity. And it is electricity that enables us to do many things with the help of machinery. Heavy loads are now lifted by cranes, machines worked by electricity, and goods carried from one place to another by trains. There are also motor-launches and steam-boats that carry supplies to many places on the riverside. All these are helping the industries and giving food and shelter to millions of our countrymen.

We feel the blessings of science, all the more, in the midst of grave national calamities. With the help of aeroplanes the government can send food and clothing to victims of famine, flood, storms, and earthquakes. The vastness and magnitude of the havoc caused by the great earthquake of Assam were observed by airmen and communicated to all the world. Thousands of people who were marooned by the floods of the Brahmaputra were rescued by aeroplanes.

Rice, wheat, and other necessities of life are sent everyday in huge trucks, not only from one end of a city to another, but also to distant parts of the country by motorable roads. These trucks were of great service during railway strikes. They brought large quantities of food, coal, and other things for the people living in Calcutta and the suburbs.

Even police-vans are fitted with radio sets for reporting disturbances and rushing armed forces to the rescue of men and women in grave peril of life. There are telephones at the post offices, police stations, and other public places, on which we may call for the fire-brigade when a great building, mill, or factory is in flames. It is the fire-brigade that has saved life and property, worth hundreds of millions, in cities and their suburbs. Science has also helped us in many other ways. There are electric fans that keep us cool in summer, and refrigerators for making ice and preserving food. There are also great ice-factories that are run by electricity and supply cheap ice to the people—ice which is badly needed by patients suffering from high fever and other diseases that affect the brain.

It is science that supplies many million gallons of filtered water to the people of Calcutta and the suburbs, and irrigates vast areas of fallow lands with water pumped from great rivers and stored in reservoirs. In the State of West Bengal, the Damodar Valley Project has made much progress, although it is not up to our expectations. Yet the construction of Tilaya Dam and the Bokharo Thermal Power House are great things that augur well for the country. When the scheme is carried out fully, it will make West Bengal self-sufficient in food and give health, contentment, peace, and prosperity to the toiling millions of this problem-province of India. Moreover, the completion of the Konar and Canada Dams, and Durgapur Barrage will help irrigate many thousands of acres of land in West Bengal, and supply cheap power for the development of her industries.

The Bhakra-Nangal Project has come to the end of its first stage. The Hirakud Dam in Orissa, and the Kosi project in Bihar have made fair progress by this time. There are also many other projects in South India that are nearing completion. When fully worked out, these schemes will control the waters of our great rivers that are allowed to run into the sea, from year to year. They will now be at our service, irrigating vast areas of waste land, and supplying many million kilowatts of electricity for the development of agriculture and industries. All these will greatly relieve human sufferings.

And these are only a few of the many ways in which science has turned the forces of nature to the service of mankind.

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### SCIENCE IN DAILY LIFE

We always speak of the wonders of science. It has given us railways, telegraph, electricity, airships, and many other things. It has done great good to the world, and has also invented terrible weapons of destruction like the atom bomb, the hydrogen bomb, and the like. We rub our eyes in awe and wonder as we think of all these.\*

But we little think how science has given us many amenities of daily life. Let us come to travelling, first of all. In days long gone by, men and women had to travel for months in making a pilgrimage. A pious Hindu had to sail in a boat down the \*Ganges to Banaras. On land they had to travel along long routes, and walk hundreds and thousands of miles to make their offerings at the sacred temples of Kedar or Badrinarayan. The wonder of it all is that the great Emperors of India in Hindu and Muslim periods used to travel from end to end of the country on horse-

back, or in carts drawn by bullocks. At any rate, travelling was most risky and tedious. We are told that a Hindu pilgrim to Banaras or Puri would make his last will before he set out on a long and perilous journey. And what is worse, the roads and riverways were infested with robbers and pirates. But, thanks to the inventions of science, travelling has now become very easy. It is indeed a pleasure. We can go by train or steamer to any part of India. We can sail in luxurious ships to England or America. And those of us, who are well-to-do, can travel by air, and reach any part of India in a few hours. We may as well fly to London in a day and a half, and to New York in two or three days. That is why thousands of tourists are coming to our country every year, not only to see our beautiful hill-stations and historic cities, but also the great rivers, lakes, and seas of India. And from India are going out, year after year, bands of young scholars for higher studies in the universities of Europe and America. Our diplomats and great men of science are flying to all parts of the world. Even those who are poor and obscure travel everyday by train, tram, motor-bus, or steamers at any time they like. There are thousands of men living outside Calcutta, who come to the city everyday to do their work in offices, schools, colleges, mills, and factories. This is an affair of everyday life. Yet we do not feel it, as we are so used to it.

Then there are physicians and surgeons who can heal diseases by wonder medicines, like penicillin, streptomycin, chloromycetin, and many other drugs of the kind. Vaccination and inoculation are preventing plague, cholera, and small-pox. Malaria, tuberculosis, and cancer are now under control. Surgery is saving hundreds and thousands of lives every year. But the West is more alive to the amenities of science than the East. There, in every home, are the electric oven, electric washer, and electric cleaner. A housewife in England can finish her cooking in half an hour. She can make hot tea or toast a slice of bread in a minute or two. She can wash her clothes and iron them very easily. All these things save time and labour. They give rest to those who have to work very hard, all day long.

In the western countries, science helps agriculture. So long the people of India had to depend on the vagaries of wind and weather for raising crops. They were helpless when there was flood or drought, and prayed to the gods for help. And the result was that famines broke out in many parts of the country from time to time. The great Bengal Famine of 1943 carried away about five millions of men, women, and children. It is only now that the government have been trying to improve agriculture by teaching modern methods of cultivation, and supplying tractors, canal water, and fertilisers to the peasants. Here again are some of the blessings of science that may relieve many of our

wants in daily life. It can save the lives of the ailing, give bread to the starving, and solve the food problem of this vast country.

Science is a God-send to men who live busy and active lives. They can drive in motor cars and go very quickly to a place, miles away, to finish their work in time. They can speak with anybody on an important question on the phone. Nay more, they may also speak, on the phone, with London or New York, settle terms of business, and solve an important problem.

Men of science are erecting huge dams for the storing of water. They are harnessing the currents of powerful rivers, and waterfalls, to supply cheap electricity to the mills, factories, and householders. In the dockyards heavy weights are lifted by cranes, and this saves the toil and trouble of labourers.

The Tramcars, which carry us everyday, from one end of the city to the other, are run by electricity. Attempts are also being made to extend and electrify the railway services in and around Calcutta, in order to relieve overcrowding in the city. If the scheme is carried out, it will find homes for hundreds and thousands of people in rural areas.

Again, it is scientific planning that is leading to the foundation of Garden Cities. But this is not all. Science has also vastly improved the methods of printing, and linotypes are used for quick and neat printing by every important newspaper. The printing machines of the day are worked by steam or electric power. They can produce thousands of printed sheets every hour. This has really contributed not only to the development of journalism, but also to the spread of knowledge. Books on all sorts of subjects are appearing daily. They are neatly printed, beautifully illustrated, and decently bound. Not only news but even pictures from distant lands are seen by television and printed in the daily newspapers, from time to time. The mammoth pumping station at Palta and the reservoir at Talla are worked by electric power. They supply pure and filtered water to every home in Calcutta, and the street hydrants used by the poor. Indeed, we are living in an age of science. We cannot walk a step forward without the aid of science. If we have the eye to see, we shall be able to realize that science is a great friend of man in daily life.

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#### SCIENCE AS A COMPULSORY SUBJECT OF STUDY

Science is the very breath of life in our times. In every land men of science have discovered many a secret of Nature, and begun to rule over the dominions of earth, air, and sea. So

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a fairly good knowledge of the elements of science is a part of good education.

The ideal of education is a harmonious development of all the faculties of the mind. That is why, in every country, the boys and girls reading in schools are made to learn at least the elements of science. The idea is that, when a boy leaves school, he must be fit to work for his living, carry on higher studies at the universities, or qualify himself for a profession.

If he cannot join the universities or prepare for the learned professions, he must reach a certain standard of fitness before he is apprenticed to any art, craft, or industry. He may work on the railways, or take training for the army and the navy. Everywhere he will require a fairly good knowledge of the elements of science and mathematics. If he is to run an engine, he must know something about the way in which it has been made. If he is a sailor, he must have some idea of the working of a ship and its mechanism. Even if he takes to the calling of a farmer or a dairymen, he should have an idea of the changes of wind and weather. That is why, in the great educational institutions of the West, the elements of science are taught in every school.

But for a long time, science was rarely taught in our schools. In most of them there was no arrangement for making experiments in science. Even now it is an optional subject for boys and girls appearing at the School Final Examination. This is, to our mind, a glaring defect in the system of education in our country. A student who does not know anything of science is not educated in the real sense of the term. In every civilized country, a student must learn at least three languages, and the elements of science.

We hear that these are days of specialization. But, to our mind, the time for specialization comes when a student leaves school and enters the university. This is the time when he will have to choose his subjects of study. He will have to decide whether he will take up Arts or Science—subjects like History, Logic, and Sanskrit, or Physics, Chemistry, and Mathematics. If he knows Mathematics well, he may carry on higher studies in Science. Otherwise, he will do well to take up Arts.

But when he goes in for higher studies in any subject, he will feel the need of knowing at least the elements of science. When he takes up history, he will read about many great battles, of ancient and modern times, the fate of which was influenced by science. He will read the history of Greece and learn, with wonder, how Archimedes destroyed the Roman ships that besieged Syracuse, with the help of huge lenses. He will read of the pyramids of Egypt, of the flying chariots of the age of the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, and the magnificent ruins of

Harappa, Mahenjodaro, and other historic cities of old. He will realize that the people of those times were so advanced in science that they could preserve the bodies of dead men for thousands of years, and erect grand and magnificent buildings which have stood on their sites for thousands of years. The architect who built the Taj Mahal must also have been a good scientist. He knew of chemicals which have preserved the freshness, beauty, and grandeur of the Taj Mahal even to this day. A student of our days also thinks of the great schemes of road-building, irrigation, and the high standard of architecture in days long, long gone by. As he reads geography, he will feel the need of science when he has to find out the reasons for the difference in rainfall, fertility of the soil, and climatic conditions of different countries of the world. Mathematics is closely allied to science, and so is Hygiene. Even when a student is reading Logic, he will come across examples taken from science. Indeed, examples illustrating the general principles of Inductive Logic can never be accurate, unless they are drawn from science. Similarly, modern Philosophy is founded on science. It is only science that alone can give us a real idea of the beauty and mystery of Nature, and of the great God who has created it all. In modern times, we believe that God is revealed to us in and through Nature. That is why Metaphysics has been described as the Queen of Sciences. And even when we read literature and poetry, we shall come across many allusions to the mysteries of science.

But leaving aside these things, we find that many of our students go in for engineering and medical studies. And they will not be able to advance a step forward without an idea of the general principles of science. We require science in everything—in weaving, painting, photography, and even in cooking.

Moreover, almost every man has a hobby of his own. There are some of us who are interested in gardening, and some that are fond of music. And those who live in the villages are interested in agriculture. It will help them a good deal, if they know something about the changes of season, wind, and weather. It will help them also if they know of the chemical products that may be used as good manure. And they will be very much benefited if they know how to irrigate their lands, and destroy white ants and other pests.

Again, we can never take care of our health if we do not know something about medicine or the principles of hygiene. There are many people who know the medicines for some kinds of diseases and keep them always in stock. They can give first aid when there is an accident, as it will take time to bring in a doctor. In a word, science is our friend in life at every step. That is why science should be taught as a compulsory subject in all the schools of our country.

## THE TRIUMPHS OF SCIENCE

Ours is an age of science. In every sphere of life, man is trying to peep into the secrets of Nature. He is eager to know the unknown and see the unseen. That is why he is trying to learn the laws which govern all the departments of Nature. And with his knowledge, he is out to bend the forces of Nature to his will. This is how he has solved many of the problems of modern times.

It has been rightly observed that the world is shrinking. It means that the vast distance between one end of the world and another has dwindled into an aerial journey of a few days. A man may now fly in an airship at a speed of hundreds of miles an hour. Today men are flying from one country to another in a very short time—a spell which we could not even dream of in days gone by. From the bullock-cart to the aeroplane is a far cry, and yet this is what has happened.

Forty years ago, we used to wonder at the speed of railway trains and steam-ships. All England was astir when George Stevenson drove his first train along a railway track. There were horsemen who rode at top speed to beat Stevenson's engine. But they failed and marvelled at this new creation of science. Yet the times are now changed, and man can now fly faster than the fowls of the air.

Indeed, man has worked wonders with the aid of science. He has bridged many a wide river, bored tunnels through rocks and mountains, cleared dense forests, and made railroads that are the wonder of the world. But this is not all. He has laid cables deep under the sea, and made it possible for a man in India to talk with a friend in New York over the telephone. The latest marvel of science is the visual telephone, which enables its subscribers to see as well as hear each other. Thanks to the labours of great scientists like Marconi, we may now contact any part of the world, across land or sea, with the help of the wireless. A speech made in America, or a song sung in Russia, may now be heard by us on the radio here in India. And what is more, pictures are flashed from one end of the world to another by television. Millions of newspapers are now printed every hour on rotary machines.

Science has also conquered many fell diseases. Vaccines have been prepared, which kill the germs of diseases like cholera, small-pox, malaria, tuberculosis, and many other diseases. Cancer is cured by timely operation and radio-therapy.

Again, science has enabled man to prepare many things by artificial methods. Man can now make rubber, jute, indigo,

petrol, and many other things. We are told that scientists in our country have been able to prepare synthetic rice and flour.

The blessings of science have brought about a close contact of thoughts and ideals among men living in the different countries of the world. We know all the people of the world with the help of the radio, the printing press, and the aeroplane. Men of distant countries meet in a few days to consult about things of national and international importance. Moreover, we can share the feelings and emotions of men whom we have never seen, and feel that they are also men like us and have the same ideals of life as ours. We can realize that, through all the differences of race, colour, and clime, man is essentially the same. And there is a deep under-current of humanity which flows from one country to another. That is why great thinkers like Bertrand Russel have preached the ideal of a great Union of all the nations of the earth—a Union which will bind the hearts of men in bonds of peace and love, and end the deadly wars and conflicts that are ravaging all the world.

But science has its evils too. There are cruel and selfish men, who are using science, not to build up a happy world but to destroy millions of men and women to gratify their ambition and love of conquest. We shrink in horror to think of the manner in which America used the atom-bomb against Japan and killed vast masses of men, women, and children, at one fell swoop. We feel that victory at such a cost is a disgrace to humanity. It is worse than defeat. It means the moral death of a nation which gave to the world men like George Washington and Abraham Lincoln.

American scientists have now discovered the hydrogen bomb, which can destroy all the world in a few hours. If atomic energy is used in the service of humanity, it can work miracles. It can do good to the world in many ways. It can produce cheap electric current, fertilize the soil by artificial rain, and change the very face of the earth. But hydrogen bomb can be used only for destruction. That is why we should try our best not only to learn science, but also to use its vast power and resources in a spirit of love and service.

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#### NOVEL READING

There are many wise people who think that young men should not read novels. They feel that young men are likely to be spoilt, if they read the tales of love and romance that are told in novels. But there are men and men. Those who are more advanced and

liberal in their ideas do not object to young men reading novels. They think that novel is a most important and interesting branch of literature. But to our mind, it is surely good for young men to read the best novels, and the works of great poets and thinkers.

We feel that there is no harm in reading novels, as there is no harm in reading the plays of Shakespeare or the poems of Shelley. The very best novels are not only delightful reading, but also vivid pictures of life in all its varied aspects. They reflect the good and evil, joys and sorrows, hopes and fears of men on earth. Some of the incidents described in novels may not be within the range of what we see in daily life. But they present before us the characters of men and women who have our feelings and emotions, hopes and fears. They may be placed in the midst of surroundings which are, at times, strange, unexpected, and even wonderful. But we should remember that truth is often stranger than fiction. The question is whether the novelist has been able to present these characters and incidents so beautifully and vividly as to make us forget, for the time being, that we have been carried far away from the world of reality to the dreamland of beauty and romance.

This is the secret of the charm that comes upon us when we read Sir Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe* or Bankimchandra's *Durgeshnandini*. But the novels of Charles Dickens bring us face to face with men and women whom we see everyday—those toiling and suffering millions who have none to feel for them in the wide, wide world. Dickens's *David Copperfield*, *Oliver Twist*, *Bleak House* and *A Tale of Two Cities* are thrilling and wonderful pictures of life. Such novels should be read with every care. They are not mere tales of love and romance. They teach us lessons that we should never forget so long as we live. The powerful influence of these novels in their days led to many social, educational, and judicial reforms. We are told that Dickens's *Oliver Twist* and *David Copperfield* led to the reform of Boarding Schools in England, and his *Bleak House* brought about the reform of the Chancery Courts with their long-drawn and ruinously expensive trials, that ended in the defeat and denial of justice. Again, Thackeray has given us a vivid picture of the foolish pomp and pride, and the fashionable vices of aristocratic society in England. In our country Sarat Chandra Chatterjee is the most powerful novelist of the day, who has given us varied pictures of men and women in all classes of society. He has not the charm and variety of Rabindranath or Bankimchandra. But he is a master of realism in fiction, and writes in a most fluent, witty, and graceful style. His *Palli Samaj* is perhaps the most vivid picture of village life in Bengal—a picture which is very different from the dreamland of poetic fancy.

It is evident that there is no sense in discarding novels and novelists. It is not possible for a student to read a novel which is absolutely innocent. And it is the same in life. Is it possible for us to live apart from men who are not free from vice? No man is perfect, and there are good and bad men everywhere. We have to come in touch with them, when we live in society, but we should never mix intimately with men who are tainted with vice. Similarly, in reading novels, we should take from them what is good, and reject all that is bad. A novel is a picture of life, which is a curious blending of good and evil, but we should always avoid novels which are absolutely worthless and immoral. Unfortunately there are shoals of novels now-a-days that are not only immoral in taste, but also morbid and sentimental in spirit. Most of the detective stories and novels dealing with races and other things of the kind should be studiously avoided by our young men and women. They may easily seduce young men and tickle their senses. In the choice of novels, as in the choice of other books, our students should act on the advice of their teachers.

Again, there are readers who love novels, simply for the sake of the stories told in them. Most of them are women, who care only for the story, and rarely think of the characters that figure in these novels and influence their action. Such readers will always avoid historical or philosophical novels. It is, however, good for them to read those novels which revive the memories of the past, and make them think deeply over the problems of life.

Moreover, by reading the novels of great writers, a young man may learn not only the art of story-telling, but also the finer qualities of style. He will learn to express his ideas vividly and gracefully. And he will enjoy the beauty and charm of the lives of the great and glorious men and women who linger in our memory and float before the mind's eye so long as we live.

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### THE STUDY OF HISTORY

History is one of the most interesting subjects of study in modern times. It is not a mere record of events that happened in the past. When we read our first lessons in history, we feel as if it is a tale of battles fought, and of kingdoms lost and won, long, long, ago. We have not the power to think that there are deep and far-reaching causes behind wars and conquests.

But as we advance in years, we feel that we can never understand the nature of human society, if we do not read history.

It is simply foolish to think that history is of no use to the present, as it deals mainly with the past. We should realize that the present has its roots in the past. It is moulded by the influences of the past, and is indeed a continuation of the past. We cannot deal with current problems unless we make a careful study of the men and things, and manners and customs of the days that are now gone by. We can never work for the good of our people and the progress of our country, unless we know how men lived, thought, and laboured in ancient India. And we can never develop the art and culture of India unless we know the history of our country from the days of Mohenjodaro and Harappa to the times when the English began to rule over India. We must read the history of Hindu, Mahommedan, and British periods of our history for light and guidance.

India is now a free country. But those who drew up the constitution of India had to think deeply over the long history of this country from the past to the present. The student of poetry and literature will have to travel from the days of the Ramayana and the Mahabharata to the present times. In reading Bengali poetry and drama, he must carry with him a vivid idea of the tales told in the famous epics of old, and the history and literature of ancient, mediæval, and modern India. He will have to read the history of the glorious reigns of Asoka and Chandragupta, the tales of Rajput chivalry, and the heroic adventures of Sivaji, Rana Pratap Singh of Mewar, and Luxmi Bai, Ranees of Jhansee. He will have to read the beautiful poetry of Jayadeb, Vidyapati, and Chandidas, and the songs of Tulsidas and Mira Bai. These things have deeply influenced the poetry and literature of Bengal. The poetry of Rabindranath is sodden through and through with the spirit of Vaishnava literature and the romantic history of our ancient land. Michael Madhusudan Dutta drew his inspiration from the fountain of love, romance, heroism, and self-sacrifice in the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. The noblest poem of Nabin Chandra Sen tells of the heroism and chivalry of Bengal at the epoch-making battle of Plassey.

Even literary forms are often moulded by the religious, social, and political conditions of a country. That is why the intensely lyrical poetry of Rabindranath Tagore is now a dream of the past. The poets of today have neither the feeling, nor the imagination, nor the varied and charming melody of the lyrics of Rabindranath. None of them has the fire and force of the best poetry of Michael Madhusudan Dutt or Nabin Chandra Sen. They are even wanting in the wit and humour of eminent writers like Kaliprasanna Kavyabisharad, Indranath Banerjee, or Brahma-bandhab Upadhyay. All this is due to the spirit of the times we live in. It is an age of confusion, disorder, and lawlessness,

in which vast masses of men have lost their finer feelings, love of art and music, and sense of humour. They have been demoralized by hunger, poverty, and the blighting of all their joys and hopes in life. That is why some of the journals of today are mostly full of froth, foam, and frenzy.

Their writings are not enlivened with flashes of sparkling wit and humour. They breathe fire and brimstone in every line, whenever their feelings are stirred by any unexpected happenings. The singers of today have not the voice to reach the audience. They sing 'flashy and careless modern songs' through the microphone. The poets of New Bengal have no sense of rhyme or rhythm. In a word, poetry has been turned into dull and dreary prose, and music has lost its grace and soul. Speakers cannot address public meetings, as they dare not face the music of the audience. Culture, refinement, and the amenities of civilized life have almost vanished from the land. All this is, to our mind, due to the social and political influences of the day.

The ideal of one God, one religion, and one people is being preached by our leaders from the housetops. But it has not made our people kind, humane, or liberal in their outlook. It has simply encouraged them to become godless heretics in the name of liberty. It has torn asunder the ties of love and affection, and the cordial relations between man and man in society. Many of our young men seem to think that liberty means license. To our mind, it is the deep and reverent study of our ancient history that may yet bring to them that love of beauty and sense of humour that have almost disappeared from the country in modern times.

A good historian is also a great philosopher. He has to reflect on the lives of great heroes and heroines and explain the deeper meaning of the events that have happened from age to age. So he has to deal with some of the greatest problems of human life—man's noble ideals, spirit of heroism and self-sacrifice, faith in the wisdom and justice of God, and his love for the motherland. He has also to probe into the hearts of the villains who have, from age to age, harried many a land with fire and sword, and destroyed the noblest works of art and beauty in their greed of gold and lust of revenge. He will have to think of the destruction of Somnath and many other beautiful temples of ancient India. He will have to think, moreover, of the shameless cruelty of men who, during the last two world wars, destroyed the most splendid works of art in many lands, and killed millions of men, women, and children by air raids. And last of all, a student of History should try, again and again, to understand why the nation of George Washington and Abraham Lincoln destroyed two great cities of Japan by dropping atom bombs. They will

also try to think out why America, the home of democracy, is now allying herself with despotic and theocratic states in the East. And if he thinks carefully, he will find that this is due to the soulless civilization of modern times. He will realize that 'judgment has fled to brutish beasts and men have lost their reason'.

Again, a good historian is a great writer. We hear of the vivid and picturesque narratives of Plutarch and Livy in ancient times. The renowned historians of England are some of the greatest masters of English prose. Their history is poetry, philosophy, and story-telling in one.

Indeed, the study of history is valuable for many reasons. It is a rich store-house of tales of chivalry, a reminder of faded glories, and a fountain of inspiration to men who love their motherland.

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### DIGNITY OF LABOUR

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy-laden." These are the kind words in which Jesus Christ spoke of the men who toil with their hands to earn their bread. At the very beginning, the Bible tells us that Adam disobeyed the command of God and suffered for his sin. The Lord cursed him saying, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return to the ground ; for out of it wast thou taken, for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." It was really hard for Adam and Eve to till the ground and reap corn, as they were living in peace and plenty in the Garden of Eden.

But since then, thousands of years have passed away and changed the face of the earth in many ways. At first, man was a tiller of the soil, a hewer of wood, and a drawer of water. Some of these men proved, in course of time, to be much more active, diligent, and skilful than their neighbours. They were able to raise more crops and fill their granaries at home. This was the process which, slowly and slowly, built up our present society. We see now-a-days, all about us, pampered idlers who are rolling in luxury and thriving on the misery and toil of their fellow-men. And we are shocked when we think calmly of the glaring inequality of human conditions in every country of the world.

In every great city we find palaces, temples, theatres, domes, and ample pleasure-grounds. And we also see in them slums in which thousands of men, women, and children live in 'hunger, poverty, and dirt'. Most of our rich men will very much like to

let things remain as they are. They do not desire that the old order should change, yielding place to the new. Yet there are great thinkers and selfless patriots who are working, heart and soul, for the good of the poor labourers in the mills, mines, factories, and cornfields. All the world cherishes the hallowed memory of men like Tolstoy, Mahatma Gandhi, Bertrand Russel, Carlyle, and Ruskin, who have pleaded, all life long, for the right of the labourer to live like a man. Thanks to their noble work, we feel now that it is the sacred duty of a government to see that the labourer is better housed, better clothed, and given at least living wages for his work. Surely, a labourer has the right to live in a clean house, eat pure food, have free medical aid, and get free education for his children. In England and America, the condition of labour has been vastly improved, and in Russia it is almost ideal. But in India, very little has been done for improving the condition of labourers. We hear long speeches from our leaders about the equality of man in the kingdom of God, and the dignity of manual labour. Year after year, there is ceremonial ploughing in the gardens of the Government House in every province and in our capital at Delhi. There is also ritual spinning attended by governors and their satellites. But the poor labourer is still toiling, all day long, in the dark mines, smoky factories, and distant cornfields in the glare of the midday sun. The government have, of late, made laws for the abolition of landlordism. But they have done little to give land to the landless, or relieve the sufferings of the poor. The number of unemployed men and women is swelling every year, as they cannot surely work, if they are not given work to do.

But among our educated men, there is a little dislike for hard work. They will rather be writing away for hours at their desks in an office on a poor pay. But they will not till land or water a garden, to earn their living. They will rather starve than work with their hands. That is why we see thousands of young men, all around us, who are poor, helpless, and sorely disappointed in life. They do not feel that they can earn much more and sweeten the days of their lives by honest labour. Yet they can very usefully employ themselves in farming, cottage-industries, spinning, and the like. These will give them better wages and keep them above want. The greatest cottage industry of Switzerland is watch-making—an industry which is warmly admired and largely patronized in all the countries of the world. And there is no reason why our people should not be able to make a living by watch-making. Many of our young men may also learn book-binding, making spectacles, printing, and various other things to keep their heads above water. And no sensible man will ever deny that these things are much more honourable than fashionable slavery.

Many great men of England and America have done menial work in college life. The great poet Goldsmith was a sizar in his student life. Yet it was this man who, in the fulness of time, wrote *The Traveller*, *The Deserted Village* and *The Vicar of Wakefield*. Abraham Lincoln was, by turn, a labourer, a soldier, and a store-keeper, before he became a lawyer at Illinois, and leapt into fame as a great patriot and orator. And it is this man who became President of the United States of America and abolished slavery. Indeed, his name will shine forever in the pages of history. James Keir Hardie, the founder of the great Labour Party of England, worked in the mines from the age of seven to his twenty-fourth year. It was from this humble place that he rose to be the Secretary of the Lancashire Miners' Union, a powerful journalist, leader of the Labour Party, and member of Parliament. It is this Labour Party which twice formed the government in England, and is now a formidable rival of the Conservatives led by Sir Winston Churchill and Sir Anthony Eden. Such is its great influence that it can boast of having, at sometime or other, among its members, men like Lord Haldane, Sir Stafford Cripps, Sydney Webb, Lord Pethick Lawrence, Aneurin Bevan, Ramsay Macdonald, and many other eminent men.

Work is a great blessing to mankind. It gives us health, peace, and contentment. A sound mind can only grow in a sound body. That is why there are great men who, in the midst of all their intellectual labours, spend some time everyday in working with their own hands. Mahatma Gandhi had a time for spinning everyday, and Mr. Lloyd George gave most of his time to farming when he retired from politics. We read in Roman history that, when Cicinnatus was called upon to become the dictator of Rome, he was found working with his spade in his own garden. In Europe and America, many middle-class families cannot engage domestic servants. There the housewives have to do all the work at home—cooking, scrubbing the floor, cleaning dishes, mending clothes, and indeed every little thing, with their own hands. Yet they live and dress decently and go out for walking everyday. It is good for our women to take it as a sign of the times, and learn the dignity of work.

Work purifies the mind and cheers up the spirit, and it is the grand cure for all maladies. It has been rightly observed that an idle brain is the devil's workshop. That is why man should work not only for his health but also for his joy, peace, and happiness. Let him realize that there is nothing more bracing, more cheering, and more honourable than honest labour. Truly does Carlyle tell us, in his *Past and Present*:

"Blessed is he who has found his work! Let him ask no other blessedness."

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## CINEMA AND ITS INFLUENCE

The Cinema is one of the most popular amusements of our time. It was very attractive and delightful to children in the early days of silent pictures. There were films that were very interesting to little boys and girls, as they displayed many amusing incidents, hair-breadth escapes, lively sports, and scenes from wild life. And they thrilled the hearts of little children in a most pleasant and innocent way. Then came long pictures like 'Quo Vadis', 'Les Misérables', 'The Daughters of Neptune', and the like. These were pictures describing the incidents of great novels. They were full of romantic adventures, wonderful scenery of mountains and seas, wild forests, and roaring torrents. They brought about a new age in the history of moving pictures and attracted a much larger audience than before. In those days men were more interested in the theatres, which presented splendid dramas that revealed vivid and lively pictures of life through the ages. Moreover, many people preferred the theatre, where they could hear the voices of the great actors and actresses and see them face to face. There were great artists who thrilled the audience, and moved them deeply by their splendid acting, lively dances, and melodious songs.

But those days are long gone by, and the talkie has made its appearance in the field. It is free from all the failings of silent pictures. Now people can see, on the screen, men and women who speak, sing, and dance before their eyes. They can also see wonderful moving pictures of storms, tempests, earthquakes, and volcanic eruptions, and hear the roar of thunder, the rumbling of earth tremors, and the sound of waves rolling in the sea. These were things unknown before. They may see as well cartoons made of pasteboard pictures, like 'Micky Mouse'—pictures which are very much enjoyed by little children. Moreover, men are now more interested in cinemas, as they live in restless times. We can hardly make time to attend a drama of five acts and spend the better part of the night in a theatre. We are too busy for all this, and must rest content with snatches of pleasure now and then. So the talkie, with its splendour, variety, music, and acting, has such a strong appeal for one and all. And there are men and women who must see the pictures at least thrice a week. To them life is incomplete without these pleasures of modern times. That is why in England they have now started Repertory Theatres that travel from city to city, and stage short plays for the entertainment of the audience. And it is a happy sign of the times that they are gaining ground everyday.

We must, however, admit that the talkie has its evils too. There are some pictures which are really grand, noble, and beautiful. Some of the great plays of Shakespeare like *Hamlet*, .

*Macbeth*, *Merchant of Venice* and *Midsummer Night's Dream* are now played for the films by eminent actors and actresses. They entertain, instruct, and ennable the audience. Great and stirring fictions like Dickens's *A Tale of Two Cities* and Maxim Gorky's *Mother* are now displayed on the screen. These are all splendid films, and the more we see of them the better.

Yet there are pictures and pictures. We must admit that quite a large number of films are rather indecent, immoral, and sickly sentimental. They are meant to please a large audience of men and women who are not well educated, and revel in scenes of this kind. We have reasons to believe that many young men and women have been spoilt and demoralized by these films. There is evidence to show that scenes of robbery and murder on the screen have led to robbery and murder in real life. That is why something should be done to direct and control the production and distribution of films by men who command respect and confidence.

And we must confess, to our shame, that this is more true in the case of Indian films. In many of them are scenes of sentimental horror and shameless obscenity, which have disgraced the screen. The quality of their acting and singing is also not very high. They compare very unfavourably with films produced in Hollywood. Among the players in our Bengal films, there is hardly any one who can sing. Indeed, we have not only lost our souls but also the sweetness and melody of the human voice.

We may conclude that the cinema can give us much knowledge and do us great good, if it is properly directed. And as things stand at present, young men and women should act on the advice of their parents and teachers in choosing pictures.

However, it is pleasing to reflect that the talkies have also given us many educational films, which teach us how to live clean, healthy, and active lives.

### THE FUTURE OF ENGLISH IN INDIA

The British ruled over this country for about two hundred years. They have influenced the lives of our people in various ways. One of these is the way in which they have inspired a love of English language and literature among the leaders of thought and culture in India.

India is a land of many peoples, races, and languages. The people of our country speak languages that are, more or less, allied to Sanskrit. Hindi, Bengali, Maithili, and the languages of

Central India are largely derived from Sanskrit. But they have a rival in Urdu which is a blending of Hindi and Persian words—a language which developed during the long years of Muslim rule in India. And of the languages that have come down from Sanskrit, Bengali is the richest and most beautiful. Next comes Urdu, which is a highly refined and graceful language. But English was the language of our rulers, during the last two hundred years.

It was due to the efforts of Lord Macaulay that English was made the medium of instruction in the days of Lord William Bentinck. There was a keen contest between two groups of thinkers and scholars in those days. Men like Raja Ram Mohan Roy stood for the study of English, and there were also powerful men who desired to maintain the dignity of Sanskrit and Persian. At last it was decided that the western system of education should be introduced into this country, and we must concede that it was good for the people of India in many ways.

As we have already observed, India is a sub-continent in which live men of many races and languages. The vast majority of men in Northern and Central India speak languages closely allied to Sanskrit. But the people living in the South speak Tamil, Telegu, Malayalam, Canarese, and other languages that have little or nothing to do with the Sanskritic languages of the North. That is why, in the long history of India in the past, there was never a feeling of unity among men of the North and the South, the East and the West.

It is the influence of the English language which united all these people in one common resolve to work for the freedom of India. It was the liberal influence of the English language that led to the foundation of the Indian National Congress. One of the earliest architects of the Indian National Congress was a great Englishman named Allan Hume. And his love of India was emulated by many eminent Englishmen from time to time. Among them were Ramsay Macdonald, Keir Hardie, Sir Henry Cotton, Sir William Wedderburn, John Bright, W. T. Stead, C. F. Andrews, and many other great Englishmen, who still live in the loving memory of millions of our countrymen. And we should cherish their names with love and gratitude for the great things they have done for India. They have played a glorious part in the long history of India's struggle for freedom. And some of them have also suffered for their love of India. The name of Mrs. Annie Besant comes to our mind when we think of her glorious Home Rule Movement and her arrest and internment. These friends of India have helped us to organize ourselves and win freedom after long years of suffering and self-sacrifice. But .

we should never have been able to appreciate and emulate their services to India without our knowledge of English.

It is the study of English history and literature that has enabled us to take our lessons from the heroic struggles for freedom in England, America, Greece, Italy, and Russia. It is in the pages of European history that we have read of the glorious revolution in America under the leadership of George Washington, and of the patriotic labours of Garibaldi and Mazzini for the liberation of Italy. It is, again, the history of modern Europe that tells us of the selfless devotion of Kossuth who lived and died for the glory of Hungary. Those of us who are warm admirers of the great Russian Revolution of 1917, have read of the labours of Lenin, Trotsky, and Stalin in the pages of books written in the English language. This could never have been done through Hindi, Urdu, Tamil, or Telegu.

Again, it is our knowledge of English that has enabled many of our scientists to carry on their researches and make inventions for the good of the world. There are no books in Indian languages to help them in the higher study of Science or Mathematics. The same thing may be said of all that we have learnt of History, Geography, Mathematics, and Science. Even those who are now telling the people not to learn English, speak pretty often in English, or in a language which is a curious mixture of Hindi and English. We are told that no one could understand the Hindi version of the Constitution of India. Our courts use the English version for their guidance, hear arguments of the lawyers in English, and deliver their judgments in English. The reports made by the committees appointed by the government are always written in English.

All these prove that English is a most virile and powerful language, and it can express our thoughts and ideas clearly, vividly, and distinctly. Indeed, in these days, a fairly good knowledge of English is essential for the advancement of learning.

Our Sanskrit texts tell us that the king is a deity. He is the incarnation of God Himself, who should be obeyed implicitly by one and all. Indeed, the noblest rulers in Hindu or Muslim India were benevolent despots. And it is our study of English history and literature that has made us realize the democratic ideal of government—the government of the people, by the people, and for the people. It is the speeches of men like Edmund Burke that make us feel that liberty is 'the immediate jewel of the soul', and 'a great empire and little minds go ill together'. The same feeling arises in our minds, when we read the dramas of Shakespeare, and the poetry of Milton, Shelley, Byron, Browning, and Tennyson. And we shall do well to remember that Byron

spent the last days of his life in organizing the people of Greece for the great battle of freedom in that historic land.

Moreover, English is a rich, powerful, and international language. It has almost replaced French as the language of trade, commerce, and international communications. There are bigots in our country who cry loudly for the replacement of English by Hindi. For a little time after independence, they attracted some people in the north of India. But now it has been found by the University Commission and other learned bodies that we can never do without English. In the course of a speech recently delivered in Madras, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru said, "I want to make it perfectly clear that it would be a bad thing for India, and for the future progress of India, if we were ignorant of any non-Indian language, and it is obvious that for us English is the easiest foreign language". And the Government of India have also declared that English must be taught as a compulsory second language in our schools and colleges. That is why English should be taught in our schools and colleges as a compulsory subject, just as it is taught in China, Russia, Germany, Malaya, and Japan, not to speak of America or the British dominions.

There is no doubt that we have to develop and enrich Hindi language and literature for the sake of national unity. But we must always have English as one of the languages, that we should learn for our good and the good of our country. It is said that every educated man should know at least three languages. Here in India, English must be one of them.

We feel sure that the various languages of India will become richer, more powerful, and more beautiful in future. But they should be studied, side by side, with English. And the knowledge of one great language will help us to enrich our own. In our country, the poetry of Rabindranath Tagore is a fine and graceful blending of the thought and culture of the East and the West. And we must admit that all our great thinkers, writers, and scientists have received much of their light and inspiration from the West.

Let us not listen to the advice of those who tell us to learn Hindi and Hindi alone, and abandon English. The pride of place will, in the fulness of time, go to the national language. But English will be our friend and companion for ever and for ever.

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### THE FUTURE OF AVIATION

Man has always longed to fly in the air. We read in the legends of Greece that Icarus flew into the air with his father. But he fell into the sea and died, as he tried to fly too near the

sun, which melted the wax with which his wings were fitted to his shoulders. We also read in the Ramayana and the Mahabharata how the great heroes of old used to fly in their chariots and fling deadly arrows at their enemies on the plains below. Time was when we used to laugh at these things as false and fanciful stories. But the wonderful inventions of science have given us many things that we could not even dream of less than half a century ago.

We have now our aeroplanes and seaplanes. These were rather crude and heavy when they were first made. They were not much in use, and men and women used to look in wonder at aeroplanes flying in the sky. During the First World War, the Germans made a new type of airships, called Zeppelins. These machines could fly much faster and higher than the aeroplanes which had been seen or known before. They made several raids on the coast towns of England; and quite a number of men were killed.

But the Second World War led the Germans to make a new type of aeroplanes. These could fly many thousands of feet above the sea-level. They carried deadly bombs and missiles that destroyed many buildings and houses in England, and sank many ships. Thousands of men, women, and children were killed in England and the other countries involved in war. Even small, neutral states like Holland and Belgium were not spared, as the Germans marched through them to strike a swift and deadly blow at France. England and America also made rapid strides in building aeroplanes. America made large and powerful bombers, and Japan did not lag behind. The result was a deadly aerial warfare that destroyed many historic cities and monuments, beautiful art-galleries, and even ancient seats of learning. Prosperous towns and villages, with their smiling cornfields, were turned into dreary deserts. There was hardly a home in England which did not lose at least one of its sons in the midst of this air-terror. And to our eternal shame, aeroplanes were used by the Americans for dropping atom bombs on Nagasaki and Hiroshima, killing almost every living thing by their deadly blasts. This is how the wonderful inventions of science were abused, and turned into dreadful instruments of horror and destruction in the interests of a few self-seeking and ambitious men, who were ruling the destinies of the civilized world. Even till the other day, American 'Globemasters' were carrying French soldiers for crushing the freedom movement in Indo-China.

However, aeroplanes have also done great things for the good of humanity. Even during the war, aeroplanes were used to carry not only soldiers but also rations and medical stores for the relief of the young men who were fighting on the distant battle-

fields of France and other theatres of war. They were of great help to the glorious work of the Red Cross among the far-flung theatres of war in France, Germany, Holland, Belgium, Russia, Burma, and Malaya.

The end of the war has placed aeroplanes at the service of humanity. They have been vastly improved in design and made much lighter than before. There are now aeroplanes that can carry a large number of passengers to distant parts of the world. These are, among other things of the kind, the American Globe-masters, Globe Trotters, Comets, and the like. They can fly at a speed which is almost beyond our dreams. A man can fly to England and America in a few days. Delegates from India are attending meetings and conferences after a short flight from Delhi or Bombay. Our ministers are flying from one end of the country to another in a few hours. During the last General Elections in India, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru carried on a whirlwind campaign on behalf of the Indian National Congress, and addressed thousands of meetings from end to end of the country. This was possible as he was flying in a fast, well-furnished, and comfortable aeroplane. In the course of a single day, he used to address a dozen meetings in different towns, cities, and villages, separated from one another by hundreds of miles.

The aeroplane has often helped the government in sending food and clothes to areas stricken with flood, famine, or earthquakes. But for the aeroplane, millions of lives would have been lost in Assam after the great earthquake of 1950, followed by the devastating floods of the Brahmaputra and its tributaries. Again, it is the aeroplane that enabled the Government of India to send troops and arms to Kashmir when that land of eternal beauty was ravaged by wild and barbarous tribes from the frontiers, with the aid and encouragement of a neighbouring country. In a word, it is the aeroplane which has saved at least the better part of the Paradise of India.

There is no doubt that heavy goods will have to be carried from one place to another through railways and waterways for many years to come. But the wonderful progress of science in recent years leads us to hope that this difficulty will be largely overcome in the years to be. Already we have aeroplanes that carry a large number of passengers and fairly heavy loads. And the machinery of these flying ships is improving very rapidly. Indeed, the time is not far off, when they will become much faster and more powerful than they are today. The planes which are being used by explorers over the snow-clad peaks of the Himalayas and the Andes prove that the conquest of the air is very near. And reports have been received that Russian rockets are flying to a height of two hundred and forty miles above the

sea-level. Russian scientists expect that, in the fulness of time, it will be possible to travel from one planet to another.

But aeroplanes are not yet perfect. They are attended with grave risks now and then. Sometimes they lose their way among the clouds and crash against mountains. At times they are caught in storms, and their engine is thrown out of gear. There were occasions on which the engines of aeroplanes failed over the high seas, and all the passengers were drowned. And of late these accidents are increasing and many precious lives have been lost. That is why it is essential to improve the machinery of the aeroplane still further, and train the pilots very carefully. These energetic young men should be more alert to the condition of the weather when an aeroplane sets out from the airport. But the work of human hand is seldom perfect. There are shipwrecks on the high seas, collisions of trains, and accidents in the crowded streets of the great cities of the world. Possibly the aeroplanes crash, from time to time, as God's warning and punishment for man's deadly and sinful raids during the Second World War. At any rate, let us work, in faith and hope, to perfect this wonderful invention of science, and place it at the service of humanity.

But this is not all. The aeroplane carries us from one part of the world to another in a few days. We meet with men of different countries, and observe their manners and method of government. In a word, we know them intimately, and they know us. This enables us to share their joys and sorrows, hopes and fears, and we feel that we are the children of one God, Who rules all the world.

Those of us who cannot afford to fly from land to land, may write letters that are carried by aeroplanes thousands of miles over land and sea. We can read the newspapers and books that come to us from different parts of the world in a few days or hours. Moreover, we can always exchange our thoughts and ideas, and this makes us kind, generous, tolerant, and respectful to the other nations of the world. And, inspite of the devilry of politicians and war-mongers, we are sure to become, in the years to be, members of one human family and citizens of one single world.

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### THE PLEASURES OF TRAVEL

Our life on earth is a 'deep wide sea of misery'. It is, indeed, a long tale of sorrows and sufferings. Yet there are spells of wonder and delight that make us forget, at least for a while, the cares and worries of the world around us. One of the ways in which we can break the monotony of life is to travel as often as we can.

Every man is born in one little corner of the world. There he can see the beauty of the deep blue sky, the glory of the rising sun, and the smiling cornfields stretching into the horizon. He can also enjoy the warblings of the birds singing among the woods. Yet after some time, he will feel tired of seeing the same sights and hearing the same songs everyday. That is why man longs to escape from the toil and trouble of life, and enjoy the beauty and glory of the world about him, from time to time. And one of the best ways in which he can give rest to his tired limbs and soothe his weary eyes, is to travel whenever he can make a little time to do so. It is not given to every man to travel to distant lands by air or sea. But anyone, who has the mind, may travel to at least some of the interesting places in his own country. Even if he takes a trip to a neighbouring village in a country-boat, he will enjoy much, and give some rest to his weary spirits. That is why our schools and colleges take out their boys and girls on excursions to places of interest. In Calcutta they are taken out to see the salt lakes and such other interesting places as the Botanic Garden at Sibpur, the Kidderpur Docks, and Diamond Harbour. They may also see the Engineering Colleges at Sibpur and Jadavpur, the jute and cotton mills near Calcutta, and Tata Iron and Steel Works at Jamshedpur. It will enliven their spirits and relieve the monotony of life, when they are carrying on their studies at school or college.

Not far away from Calcutta is the famous seat of learning and culture founded by Rabindranath Tagore at 'Santiniketan', which has now grown into a national and international university. It is called 'Viswa Bharati' or the home of universal learning. Santiniketan is a little town, rich in the beauty of nature. It is surrounded by large open fields on all sides. In the town itself are fine little houses, each of which is well-planned and neatly arranged, and has a little garden of its own. In the centre of it are the beautiful temple and the house built by Maharshi Debendranath Tagore in the midst of a shady mango grove. Santiniketan has its School of Arts, Music Hall, and departments for the teaching of literature, art, philosophy, and science. It has an excellent library, stored with many thousand volumes of good books. It has also its Theatre Hall, excellent hostels for boys and girls, and ample playgrounds. Here is a unique blending of art, culture, and music. Two miles off is Sriniketan, with its departments of arts, crafts, agriculture, dairy, and farming. Midway between the two is 'Binay Bhawan' or Training School for teachers. Three hours' journey will bring the boys and girls of Calcutta to this beautiful place, full of life and liveliness, and breathing an air of refinement and culture.

But travelling is pleasing in more ways than one. It is a source of joy and inspiration to the historian, the scientist, and

the philosopher. A student of History will have a clear and vivid idea of the things he has read, when he sees with his own eyes Plassey, Haldighat, Panipat, and the forts of Agra, Ramgarh, or Delhi. The student of Architecture will gain a world of knowledge when he observes the beauty, splendour, and magnificence of Taj Mahal. The student of Art will feel inspired when he sees the rock carvings of Ajanta, Ellora, and Elephanta. To the lover of poetry, the hills, the streams, the rivers, and the green fields of East Bengal are a fountain of joy and inspiration. To the student of English Literature, a visit to the lakes and hills of Grasmere and Stratford-on-Avon, the home of Shakespeare, is a joy beyond his dreams. Similarly, Greece, Rome, Florence, Naples, and Venice have attracted lovers of art and beauty in every age. They have also inspired some of the best poems of Milton, Shelley, Keats, and Byron, and given their beauty and colour to some of the finest dramas of Shakespeare.

The student of Science and Engineering will find much pleasure in visiting countries that are famous for their wonderful inventions in these spheres. The famous irrigation works and dams of America and Russia are an example to all the world. Again, the long voyages of Columbus, Vasco da Gama, and other daring sailors have discovered many strange lands and strange peoples. It was Columbus who discovered the West Indies, and laid the foundation of Canada and the Americas. But for him there would be no United States of America. All these are only a few instances which prove that travelling is not only a joy but also an inspiration to all the world. It is this feeling of joy that has led many an adventurer to perish among the eternal snows of the Himalayas and the frozen seas of the North and the South Pole.

In these days, the love and pleasure of travelling has been heightened by the discovery of aeroplanes and other rapid means of communication between different parts of the world. Today a man can travel from one end of India to another in a few hours. He can reach London in a day and a half, and travel to America in planes that fly at the rate of hundreds of miles per hour. This has not only enhanced the joy of travelling, but also brought about a close contact between countries in all parts of the world. And it is this that has largely increased the number of tourists, many of whom come to India to see the beauty of the valley of Kashmir, the snowy peaks of the Himalayas, and the splendour of Taj Mahal, not to speak of the grandeur and stirring life of her great cities in the north, south, east, and west.

Similarly, there are tourists in our country who visit the holy shrines of Kedar and Badrinath by walking hundreds of miles on foot in the midst of snow-storms and the perils of the mountains. There are some daring spirits among us who have

travelled all over the world and recorded their rich experiences of strange lands and strange peoples in books that are read with wonder and delight in every home.

We should also remember that travelling is one of the most innocent pleasures of life. There is no joy on earth which is purer, sweeter, or nobler than that of a man who stands among the virgin snows and ice-fields of the Himalayas. It reminds us of the littleness of man and the vanity of human wishes, as we look at the majestic ocean with its thundering waves rolling and dashing against the shore. And it teaches us that man's love of conquest is an idle dream, when we look at the ruins of the great empires of old.

We may conclude that travelling gives us joy, opens up to us new worlds of knowledge, and teaches us humility and love of God—God who is the Creator and Architect of the vast and mysterious universe.

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### SCIENCE AND MODERN WAR

"They wrote in the old days that it is sweet and fitting to die for one's own country. But in modern war there is nothing sweet nor fitting in your dying. You will die like a dog for no reason."

These are the words in which a famous American novelist of our day, speaks of war in our times. He feels rightly that war is brought about by the selfishness, jealousy, and restless ambition of a handful of men in every country. It is they who use the inventions of science for killing men swiftly, suddenly, and mercilessly. Indeed, modern war is carried on with many deadly things that science has brought to light.

Our men of science have given many good things to the world. They have given us railways, steamships, aeroplanes, the radio, and many other things that have brought peace, joy, comfort, and prosperity to mankind. That is why, for long years now, science has been regarded as a blessing of God. Men of the old order used to look upon science with suspicion. They thought that science was an enemy of religion. But with the advancement of learning, these old ideas were changed, and science was welcomed, all over the world, as the greatest friend of humanity. It was regarded as a revelation of the power, greatness, and glory of God. And the great men of science, who had wrested many a secret from the bosom of Nature, were always kind, patient, and God-fearing. From age to age, they worked for the good of mankind.

But the times are now 'out of joint'. The present-day world is dominated by politicians. These men control everything in the State—its government, finances, arts, crafts, and industries. What is worse, they lord it over the men of science. They take the name of God at every breath, and tell us that they are working to make the world free, contented, and peaceful. They swear by democracy, or the government of the people and for the people. But all this is mere bluff and bluster. These men plunge whole nations into war, in order to carry out their ambitious designs. In the name of freedom, they are really trying to rob vast millions of men of their freedom. In the last World War, every country, engaged in war, called upon her scientists to invent the deadliest weapons of destruction for using them against their enemies. There were strong men among scientists who refused to do this devilish work, and managed to cross over to other countries. But many of them were compelled to make for their country powerful submarines for wrecking ships, and mammoth planes for bombing cities and killing their people. They also made poison gas and the atom-bomb for carrying on their deadly work. It was with these things that Hitler carried on destructive air-raids over Poland, Britain, Holland, and Belgium. Similarly, the Americans destroyed the cities of Nagasaki and Hiroshima in Japan with atom-bombs. It is the most frightful thing ever heard of in the history of warfare. These two cities were totally destroyed with almost all their men, women and children. Even the dumb animals perished and all the buildings were turned into ashes. The few men and women who survived suffered from the effects of radio-activity for months, and many of them were mentally deranged.

This was, we think, the most heroic episode in the last global war, and it was warmly supported by Mr. Winston Churchill in the British Parliament. The latest gift of America in the cause of democracy is the hydrogen bomb, which is much more terrible than the atom bombs dropped on Japan. Here are a few glaring examples of the evil uses of science. We are shocked to think that this cruel, cold-blooded, and brutal massacre was carried out at the behest of men, who are proud of being the sons of a country that was once adorned with men like George Washington and Abraham Lincoln. Abraham Lincoln had to take his country through four years of Civil War. He had to do it most unwillingly for the sake of principles that were very dear and sacred to his heart. He was resolved to keep up the unity of the American people, and abolish the curse of slavery. But he was very kind, tolerant, and humane even during the dark days of the war. He ordered that none of his generals should use force, until he was compelled to do so. And when the Civil War came to an end, he forgave all who had taken up arms against the State.

But the democracy reared with the blood of these men is now crumbling. The United States of America are now governed by a plutocracy of the worst type. They have forgotten all the noble principles of Christianity, and sacrificed their humanity at the altar of Mammon. They have also forgotten the message of love, charity, and forgiveness preached by Christ two thousand years ago. They have no sense of justice, and have become cruel and selfish to the core. That is why the havoc of the atom-bomb was followed by the hanging of German and Japanese generals amid the rejoicings of the Christian world. And the crowning act of Christian love and charity was the judicial murder of the Rosenbergs, after five years of trial and detention, on evidence of a most doubtful character. This is also the considered opinion of Bertrand Russel. He has declared that the couple were absolutely innocent of the charges against them, and they were the victims of a vile intrigue of the American Secret Police.

All these things prove that the world is fast reeling into barbarism. It is not the way to progress, but to ruin. But we should not blame the scientists alone. They have given us the fruit of their discovery after years of devoted and laborious service. It is the governments of Europe and America that have diverted their wonderful talents to the work of revenge and destruction.

The best thing for us today is to change the moral outlook of the world we live in. The vast majority of men are good and kind at heart. So this is the time when good men, all over the world, should combine to throw off the yoke of the despots who rule over them, and teach all people to love their neighbours as they love themselves. They should remember that 'peace hath her victories, no less renowned than war.'

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**PEACE HATH HER VICTORIES NO LESS  
RENOWNED THAN WAR**

In the long history of the world, poets have often sung the glories of war. The Ramayana and the Mahabharata tell us stories of great battles, in which many a hero was crowned with victory, or died in a blaze of glory. In historic times, we read of the battles of Marathon and Thermopylae in Greece, Panipat and Haldighat in India, and Trafalgar and Waterloo in Europe.

But we hear very little of the glorious works of art that flourished in times of peace. It must be said to the credit of the people of ancient Greece that, in their homeland, the arts of war and peace were developed side by side. The same thing cannot, however, be said of ancient Rome. The Romans revelled

in war and conquest. Indeed, there were many civil wars in Rome among the leaders of the country for the honour of commanding vast armies, or sharing the spoils of war. The Roman triumphs were splendid processions in honour of victorious Roman generals. These were very popular, although the prisoners of war were tied to the chariot-wheels of the victor and dragged along the streets of Rome. The great works of art—the magnificent towers, temples, theatres, and palaces—were erected mostly by the Roman Emperors in times of peace. The Augustan Age is one of the most memorable eras in the history of letters. But ancient Rome cared more for the glories of war than for the wonderful works of art.

Times have now changed vastly. The great victories of ancient Greece, Rome, Persia, India, and Europe have little or no interest for the people of modern times. They are remembered only by the curious students of history, politics, or literature. But they have no charm for the millions of men and women, who are working in various spheres of nation-building. And in the making of a nation, the arts of peace are much more useful than the arts of war. In times of peace, man has made many wonderful inventions and discoveries. He has built magnificent roads across lofty mountain ranges. He has bored tunnels through them, and laid railway lines along which trains wind their way to many important towns, cities, and centres of industry. These things would never have been possible, but for the labours of great scientists and engineers in times of peace. It is in the quiet cloisters of colleges and homes of research in peace-time that they carried on their studies and thought over the problems of modern civilization. They made experiments on a small scale in their laboratories, before they gave the fruits of their labour to the world. James Watt thought of the steam-engine, when he looked at his kettle boiling. The theory of gravitation flashed upon the mind of Newton when he saw an apple dropping to the ground from a tree in his garden. Marconi began with small experiments in wireless telegraphy along spaces that covered the length of a broomstick.

It is extremely doubtful whether they could have laid the foundations of modern science in the midst of the horrors of war. There is no doubt that war has driven many scientists to invent formidable weapons of destruction, like atom bomb, hydrogen bomb, poison gas, and the like. But if the world survives the ravages of war—as it surely will—the memory of these inventions of science will shock all mankind. These gifts of the war will be cursed by sorrowing mothers and children all over the world. They will be looked down upon as a disgrace to civilization. But the world will remember with love and admiration the priceless gifts of peace—the great Taj Mahal

that Shah Jahan built over the remains of his beloved wife, the Hanging Garden of Babylon, the splendid Cathedral of Notre Dame, the famous Art Gallery of Paris, and the beautiful palaces and buildings that stand on each side of the great canal of Venice. They will also admire the beauty of the fine hill-stations in India, Switzerland, and many other countries of the world. They will admire the paintings of Raphael and Rembrandt, and the wonderful architecture of Byzantium and ancient Greece. These are things which will live, when the great victories of war are forgotten by vast millions of men and women here on earth.

These are the victories of peace—victories that have enabled man to rule over the boundless oceans, the kingdom of the air, and the realm of art and beauty. Who could ever think that man would be able to rule the air? Who could even dream that it is possible to travel from end to end of the world in a few days, or hear the voices of men living thousands of miles away on the radio or the telephone? And who could ever think that many of our glorious works of art will live forever? Yet all these are the gifts of peace, and not of war. Indeed, Emerson was quite right when he said, "Our greatest refutations of the nineteenth century will be cited afterwards as instances of our barbarism."

We have now come to an age that has no faith in God and no regard for the highest principles of truth and justice. That is why the followers of Christ in Europe and America are tearing each other to pieces. And of late, America has taken the lead in disturbing the peace of Asia. They have made pacts for supplying arms to some countries of the East, joined the South East Asia Treaty Organization, and supported the Baghdad Pact. In a word, they are following the warm water policy of Czar Nicholas of Russia that led to the Crimean War of 1854. Even the holy Sabbath has been violated, and aerial bombing has killed thousands of men, women, and children on Sundays. Are all these things of which we may be justly proud? Do all these victories fill our hearts with joy? Indeed, victory at such a cost is more inglorious than defeat. It is a disgrace worse than death. But we shall always cherish, with love and admiration, the memory of the splendid works of art, the wonderful inventions of science, and the priceless gifts of our poets and philosophers from age to age. It is said that, on the night before the battle of Quebec, Wolfe was sailing in a boat across the river St. Lawrence and reading Gray's 'Elegy'. And he was so charmed with the beauty of this great poem that he cited some of the lines that moved him deeply. He exclaimed that he would feel much happier and prouder if he had been the author of these lines than the victor of Quebec.

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## THE ATOM BOMB

The Atom Bomb is the most deadly gift of science to man. Science has given many great things to the world. Steam engines, airships, telegraphs, telephones, electricity, and the wireless are some of the greatest blessings of science in our times. Indeed, modern civilization has been built up mainly by the labours of scientists.

But it is science 'again' which has invented terrible weapons that threaten to destroy all the glorious works of art and monuments of ancient civilization. We have heard how, during the last World War, many beautiful cities, with their towers, temples, and art-galleries were harried and destroyed by fire, sword, and terrible air-raids. Nearer home, Burma is in ruins. Rangoon, once the pride of Burma, has been scarred, battered, and shattered by aerial bombs. The historic city of Mandalay has been raged to the ground, and turned into a shambles by the air-raids of England and her allies.

Yet all these melt into thin air when we think of the ravages of the atom bomb in the year of grace, 1945. The Second World War was drawing to a close, and Germany and Italy had laid down their arms. Japan was still carrying on against heavy odds. She had abandoned Burma, Malay, and the Philippines. In a word, she was on the verge of collapse, and it was a question of days for her complete defeat, surrender, and humiliation. Just at this time, the Americans dropped atom bombs on the industrial city of Hiroshima. In a moment almost the whole city was wiped out. And soon after another bomb was dropped on the port town of Nagasaki. This ended the war, but the loss of life was simply terrible. Even Hitler could not dream of such a thing. Almost all the men, women, and children of these two cities, numbering about three hundred thousand, were killed. All their buildings and works were raged to the ground. The few men and women who escaped death, suffered from nervous shock and mental derangement. It was a treat to the civilized world to hear Mr. Winston Churchill speaking in defence of this cold, calculated, and brutal massacre of innocent men, women, and children. He said that a long-drawn war would mean much greater sufferings to the world, and the atom bomb had put an end to the war. It had saved vast millions of men all over the world and the agony and horrors of a long war. But his eloquent speech reminds us of Rome burning and Nero fiddling. He spoke like a surgeon who kills his patient to put an end to his sufferings. The atom bomb brought peace to the world, but it was the peace of the grave.

The United Nations Organization was founded with high hopes for the future of mankind. But the atom bomb has split the

United Nations Organization into two power blocs, the one headed by Soviet Russia and the other by America. Both of these powers have invented atom bombs, and they are eager to restrict the use of this deadly weapon. But they have not been able to agree, as they are not prepared to share their atomic secrets. It is now widely known that Russia is carrying on experiments in the wilds of Siberia. And the latest and the greatest experiment of its kind in Russia was announced by Messrs. Bulganin and Khrushchev during their visit to South India. That is why the fear of the atom bomb hangs over all the world like a dark cloud. It is a terror that has led the nations of the world to slacken their constructive work for the good of humanity. They have employed great scientists to have more atom bombs, and to improve upon them. And lately we are hearing of the hydrogen bomb, which is still more terrible and destructive than the atom bomb.

The idea behind this cold, callous, and cruel move is that, if we accept war, we must accept the whole of it. If the nations of the world still look upon war as a legitimate weapon for settling international disputes, they have to carry it on all fronts and fight to a finish. There was a time when war was merely a conflict between the armies of two rival powers. We have read that Kant was calmly writing away his famous *Critique of Pure Reason*, when the smoke of the cannon on the battle-fields of Konningsburgh was rolling through his window. We have read in the ancient history of India how peasants used to work in smiling cornfields by the side of soldiers fighting for the honours of the day. But now-a-days, war has been lifted to the skies, and the civilian population suffers much more terribly than the soldiers on the fields of battle.

Leaving nation-building works in the background, the great powers of the West are now pleading for the banning of the atom bombs on the one hand, and building any number of deep underground shelters on the other. These shelters are meant for men and women who may rush for safety when atom bombs are dropped from the air. It seems as if we are going back to the primitive times when men used to live in caves.

Many people blame science for inventing these cruel and deadly weapons. But we should remember that it is not science, but the jealousy, cruelty, and selfishness of men in power that have to answer for them. If the power and energy held in the atom bomb be used, not for war but for the good of humanity, it will change the face of the earth. It will be a source of power and energy beyond the dreams of man. It will turn dreary deserts into smiling cornfields and lovely gardens of fruits and flowers. It will form clouds and bring down rain when any corner of the earth is visited by famine for want of water and

failure of crops. It will rebuild cities ruined by fire, flood, or earthquake in no time. And it will perhaps bring this earth into living contact with the other planets of the solar system. In short, it should be the earnest endeavour of each and every nation to harness atomic energy to the service of mankind.

The Government of India have done well to set up an Atomic Energy Commission. They have invited eminent scientists to carry on researches, in order to use atomic power for the peaceful development of the country. If the labours of our men of science are crowned with success, India will be able to send a message of peace and good-will to all the other nations of the world.

It is, therefore, the clear duty of the United Nations to ban the use of atomic weapons, and form an international commission of learned, wise, and high-souled men, who will direct atomic energy to the peace, prosperity, and happiness of all the people of the world.

### THE USES AND ABUSES OF MEDICINE

The study of medicine is one of the noblest callings of life. There is no duty more sacred, and no art that is nobler than the art of healing. That is why the man of medicine has been respected in every age, not only in civilized society but also among men steeped in the darkness of ignorance. We are told that Peter the Great, a famous Emperor of ancient Russia, hated lawyers like poison, but he respected physicians. He once declared that he had only two lawyers in his kingdom, and he had hanged one of them and cut out the tongue of the other. As a barbarian, he could not realize that lawyers are there to protect life and liberty, and the best of them have been leaders of men in every advanced country. But this incident proves that even the darkest savage under the sun respects the noble art of healing. During the last World War, the whole of Burma and Malay was occupied by the Japanese. There were a number of Indian doctors as prisoners of war in Singapore. They were treated with every respect and consideration by the Japanese, who tortured the English and Canadian prisoners of war like beasts. Indeed, the value and usefulness of medicine is recognized by men of every country in the world.

In India, however, the opportunities of studying the medical science are few and far between. The number of medical schools and colleges is very small, and little or no attention is paid to the study of Homoeopathic, Ayurvedic, or Unani systems of medicine. Yet these systems of medicine have worked wonders in curing deadly diseases, and relieving human suffering. We have heard of distinguished *Kavirajas*, who could detect a disease simply by

feeling the pulse of the patient. And they were also great teachers, who gave to their pupils the light of knowledge. In those days, none but devoted scholars could study the sacred lore of medicine. Those men looked upon their profession as the call of God to duty. That is why they went from door to door, attending on the sick, and even distributing medicines to the poor and the helpless.

Medical science has made wonderful progress in recent times. It is due to the laborious research of a band of devoted men of science that we have the Rockefeller Institute, four Medical College Hospitals in Calcutta, and the School of Tropical Medicine. We have also the Haffkine Institute in Bombay, the Tuberculosis Institutes at Madanapalli, and the All India Institute of Hygiene and Public Health in Calcutta. Moreover Radium, X-ray, and ultra-violet rays help us in resisting and destroying the germs of many incurable diseases. But early diagnosis and detection are the most important things in the treatment of diseases. This can be done by experienced physicians, who can give ample time and thought to each and every patient under their care. Thanks to the wonderful researches of modern times, malaria, kalaazar, tuberculosis, and diphtheria are no longer incurable. Even small-pox and plague can be prevented by vaccination and inoculation. The discovery of penicillin, streptomycin, chloramycetin, and many other wonder drugs have given a message of hope to mankind. Yet there are many other diseases which have not yet been conquered. For this, facilities for medical research should be extended and encouraged in every possible way. It is the clear duty of the State and the people of India to open, under the advice and guidance of distinguished physicians and surgeons, laboratories for medical research in every city, town, and village of India.

In times of famine, flood, and the outbreak of epidemics, bands of selfless medical men should travel from village to village, treating patients, and giving diet and medicines free to the poor and the helpless. "Blessed be those that are merciful, for they shall see God". Our men of medicine should remember that 'he who giveth to the poor, lendeth to the Lord.' Life is not worth living, if it be not sweetened with love and charity. Those who have learnt this noble art of healing can save millions of lives every year, and give health, joy, and comfort to every home. They can wipe the tears of disconsolate mothers, and give to each of our boys and girls a healthy mind in a healthy body. As we think of this great science, we are reminded of the wonders of medicine and surgery in our times. Let us hope that the day is not far off, when we shall have magic drugs that will be able to rekindle the spark of life in men, who are now given up for dead. All these are the uses and glorious possibilities of

medicine. But these depend on the spirit in which the work of healing is carried on.

Yet, we hear also of many abuses of medicine in our day. There are, in our country, distinguished physicians and surgeons who demand fees that are beyond the reach of the vast majority of our people. We have heard of doctors who do not charge fees from their rich and influential friends, though they are very hard and exacting to those who live from hand to mouth. Public hospitals have no beds for men or women who cannot afford to give private calls to the medical officers in charge. Urgent delivery cases are often sent away, and many thousands of patients are refused admission, or lie huddled in the corridors, waiting for their chance of admission. Bitter complaints are heard against the nurses attending on patients in hospitals. And the worst of it is the large-scale supply of spurious drugs from the medical stores of great cities. Many people buy these medicines at a high cost, but they are rarely effective. It is suspected that quite a large number of deaths is caused every year by the use of spurious drugs. It is a shame that there are not many more hospitals, nursing homes, and efficient medical men in our country—men who work at the call of God in the spirit of service.

This is a noble sphere of work in which one and all—physicians, surgeons, nurses, the State, and the public—should join hands and work for the good of mankind. If we fail to work in this faith, we shall fail in our duty. The distinguished man of medicine, who has no love and sympathy for his fellow-beings, is not worthy of his great trust. The work done by him is an abuse of the science of medicine.

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### MEANS OF COMMUNICATION IN MODERN TIMES

This is an age of science. All over the world men are trying to save time, and peep into the secrets of Nature. The population of many countries in the East and the West is increasing everyday. So the problem of feeding and giving employment to these vast masses of people is causing grave anxiety to each and every state. To solve this great problem, quick transport and communication between the different countries of the world have become most essential. That is why men of science have invented many wonderful means of communication in modern times. Moreover, war clouds are still hanging over all the world. This has impelled the government of every state, great and small, to call upon its scientists to invent means of rapid communication between one country and another.

Among the various means of communication, we may mention railways, telegraphs, motor-cars, radio, and aeroplanes. The invention of these things has brought about a great change in man's ways of living, thinking, and working.

In days long gone by, the people of our country had to travel from one place to another on foot, in country-boats, or in bullock-carts. A man who desired to see a friend or relative in Banaras, had to sail in a boat down the Ganges and reach the holy city in a month or more. There was no regular postal service. It was Sher Shah who introduced, for the first time, the system of carrying mails on horseback. And it was only during British rule that regular postal services were introduced.

But things have advanced so far that, now-a-days, letters and postal parcels are carried, over long distances, by aeroplanes. A newspaper published in Delhi in the morning may be read in Calcutta in the evening. This has very much improved the means of communication, not only between one city and another, but also between countries in all parts of the world. Telegrams and cables carry messages quickly across lands and seas. But more wonderful than all these has been the development of telephone service in recent years. Urgent business communications between Calcutta and New York may be carried on by telephone. Only a few years ago, the terms of business between an Indian and a foreign firm could be settled by sending repeated letters and cablegrams. Yet the real position between the parties could not be made clear for months and months. But today, a business firm in Calcutta can make a contract with a leading firm of New York in a couple of minutes, on the telephone. In times of war, urgent messages are sent on the phone, and troops carried by mammoth aeroplanes and seaplanes.

But this is not all. Ministers and diplomats can travel from one end of the world to another in a few days, and there is no need of long voyages across the seas. They meet in conferences and exchange ideas every now and then. There are tourists who travel to many lands and enjoy the beautiful sights and sounds of Nature all over the world—the thundering waterfalls, the vast glaciers and avalanches, and the snowy peaks of lofty mountain ranges. They can see the marvels of science in America, Russia, and other countries of the world. They can see historic cities ringing with the memories of battles that have made and unmade cities, thrones, and powers. They can see splendid works of art in France, Italy, Greece, and India. They can mix with the people of all countries and observe their men, manners, governments, arts, and industries. These tours broaden their outlook on life, and make them feel that they are all citizens of the world. And, indeed the United Nations Organization would cease

to be, but for the means of communication in modern times. Delegates from every corner of the world meet in this great council of nations, and try to bring about friendly relations and cultural contact between the different nations of the earth. They try to settle all disputes by mutual agreement, and prevent war. They protect weaker nations, threatened by a mighty power.

Again, we can see pictures of men and scenes in distant lands, received by our great newspapers by television. We can not only read all about them in the messages and articles appearing in our journals, but also see the vivid pictures of the men and events described in them. Radio broadcasts have vastly widened the bounds of knowledge. We can hear a distinguished savant or statesman lecturing in Europe and America on the radio. We can hear the songs sung by men and women in other lands across the seas. We can hear important news long before they are published in the papers next morning. We can hear also many striking announcements of policy by the governments of great states. But this is not all. They tell us of the adventures of seamen, mountaineers, and explorers every hour of the day. They speak of the movements of troops and fate of great battles, when war is on. But, more than all these, are the lectures delivered by distinguished men of arts, letters, and science. They light up many a dark corner of the mind and give us a glimpse of the yet untravelled world of knowledge. They awaken, kindle, and stimulate our curiosity and passion for knowledge. We can learn much from books and the lectures of our teachers in colleges. But in modern times, these must be supplemented by the treasures of knowledge and research in other countries. In a word, these varied means of communication in our day have brought all the nations of the world much nearer to each other, and bound them in ties of friendship, goodwill, and love of liberty.

Yet, among them, perhaps the most wonderful is man's romantic journey in the kingdom of air. The conquest of the Everest would never have been possible, if the climbers were not provided with oxygen and radio sets. The great mountaineers of the world, in our days, fly thousands and thousands of miles, and carry a clear and vivid idea of the mission before them. They see the difficulties in the way and the possibilities of overcoming them. It is by their flight in aeroplanes that recently, a mountain higher than the Himalayas, has been found below the sea in the antarctic region. It is with the help of planes that parties sent by the government discovered the vastness and magnitude of the terrible earthquake in Assam. And but for the supplies of food and clothing sent by air, the loss of lives would have been still more horrible. Aeroplanes have helped the State in quelling disturbances and mitigating the sufferings of millions

of men and women in the midst of famine, flood, and other calamities. In a word, the quickening progress of radio, telephone, and aeroplane is bringing us nearer and nearer to the ideal of one God, one government, and one people.

And when this age of selfishness, jealousy, and unrest has passed away, we shall feel that we are all soldiers of God and citizens of the world.

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### THE STUDY OF BIOGRAPHY

The real history of a nation is reflected in the life and work of its heroes. If we love our country, we shall naturally desire to know something about the great men who lived, worked, and died for the honour and glory of the motherland. We shall always long to hear of the glorious deeds done by our heroes, and the light of knowledge given to us by our great thinkers. We shall be curious to learn all that is known about the poets, artists, and sculptors who have left behind them things of beauty that will live for ever.

That is why we shall have to read the lives of these men, written by great and distinguished men of letters. These eminent writers have given to us biographies which are cherished all over the world, as some of the choicest gems of literature. In England, the life of Dr. Johnson by Boswell is regarded as the finest biography in literature. In that great book, Boswell has recorded, as minutely as ever, every incident of Dr. Johnson's long and crowded life. This cultured young man from Scotland was bitterly disliked by Dr. Johnson for many years. Yet he followed Dr. Johnson to his club, to the houses of his friends, and indeed everywhere. And he has never gone beyond the truth in telling the life-history of the man whom he loved with all the warmth of his heart, and worshipped as a god. Dr. Johnson's writings are not very interesting reading in our day. But his fire, force of character, and gallies of wit and humour are reflected in his conversations, which have been recorded by Boswell in his great biography. Southey's *Life of Nelson*, Mark Pattison's *Milton*, and Morley's *Life of Gladstone* are brilliant specimens of biography in English literature. These are biographies which have been written in an excellent style, and record all the incidents in the lives of those great men most vividly and truthfully. Each of them gives the real picture of a great life.

There was a time when biographies were written with the sole object of singing the glory of kings, queens, or wealthy

patrons of arts and letters. They suppressed many unpleasant things in the lives of these men, and lauded their idols to the skies. They described their patrons as angels in the guise of men. That is why Macaulay tells us that some writers of biographies die of the disease of admiration. This is a disease which is still raging among pampered politicians and their satellites all over the world. Even authors of text-books for schools have caught the infection. They are teaching our boys to be selfish and servile from the earliest years of life. But, now-a-days, we come across biographies which are frankly critical. They give us all the interesting incidents and anecdotes of a great life and describe them beautifully and vividly. And what is more, they reflect on the lives of these men and analyse them critically. Such are *Eminent Victorians* by Lytton Strachey, and Sydney Lee's *Life of Shakespeare*. Turning to our own country, we may refer to the Life of Michael Madhusudan Dutt by Jogindranath Bose. It is a most excellent biography, which tells us of the romance of the poet's stirring life.

Again, biographies give us a vivid idea of the times in which our great men lived and died. Boswell's *Life of Johnson* throws a good deal of light on the long and inglorious reign of George the Third. We learn that George the Third was loved by the people of England for his simple habits, pure character, and devotion to the church. We learn also that Dr. Johnson loved the king for his many good qualities in private life. And on reading all this, we feel that it was an age when great poets, philosophers, and statesmen shed the light of their genius on England. It was the age of Wordsworth, Shelley, Keats, Coleridge, Byron, Goldsmith, Edmund Burke, Jonathan Swift, Sir Joshua Reynolds, and the great Doctor Johnson. We realize that it was the foolishness, bigotry, and intolerance of the king that led to the American War of Independence and the loss of England's colonies. Similarly, the life of Shakespeare or Milton tells us of the times in which these great poets lived. And Morley's *Life of Gladstone* gives us a brilliant and lively picture of the Victorian Era.

In our country Jogindranath Bose's *Life of Madhusudan Dutt* gives us a glowing picture of the age in which the poet lived and died—its great men, its society, and its art and culture.

Indeed, as Carlyle tells us, 'the history of the world is but the biography of great men'. All the noble ideals of patriotism, religion, and philosophy are revealed and exemplified in the lives of great men. And in reading a good biography, we are also imbibing the noble ideals of these lives. That is why Jesus told his followers,

"Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven."

Lives of great men are the light of the world. They inspire us in the dark and dreary hours of life. In the midst of all our trials, sorrows, and sufferings, we may turn to the shining examples left behind them by the noble and wise men of old. We can read the history of these great lives and feel, with the poet, that

"Lives of great men, all remind us  
We can make our lives sublime,  
And, departing, leave behind us  
Footprints on the sands of time."

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### THE FUNCTION OF A UNIVERSITY

In days long gone by, a band of great teachers used to lecture on the most important branches of learning to students, who gathered round them from all parts of the world. This assembly of scholars and learners was called a university. In course of time, the number of young men longing for the light of knowledge increased greatly. That is why a number of colleges were established in different places for the education of young men going in for higher studies in arts and sciences. All these colleges were run by teachers who were vastly learned in the subjects taught by them. There were very few printed books in those days, and young students had to flock round these great scholars to hear them. With the years, these colleges grew in number and formed themselves into universities. Each university had a group of colleges working under its care and guidance. It prescribed the course of studies in each subject, maintained discipline, provided libraries of good books for the scholars, and granted degrees to those who were found to be worthy of this distinction by their learning, knowledge, and character.

In our times, the main function of a university is to grant affiliation to colleges, lay down their courses of studies, and examine the students sent up by them. And the university grants certificates or diplomas to the students who pass these examinations. So, the university of our day is, more or less, a huge machine for turning out graduates and undergraduates.

But it is the duty of a true university to invite distinguished scholars and savants to lecture on all the branches of higher learning, and encourage deep study, thinking, and laborious

research in arts, letters, and sciences. A university of the latest times has faculties of Law, Engineering, Medicine, and everything of interest in the world of knowledge. Indeed, a great university of today is not merely content with teaching. It is always seeking to extend the bounds of knowledge by scientific inventions, discovery of the hidden treasures of history and philosophy, and revealing the deeper meaning of poetry and arts. There are great and distinguished teachers who are not only instructing but also inspiring their students to seek the light of knowledge and reveal the truth, beauty, and mystery of the world of science, history, philosophy, poetry, and romance. It is the labours of great scientists adorning our universities that have given to the world the marvels of the wireless, the telephone, and the aeroplane. But for the universities and their splendid laboratories, many of these savants would not have been able to work wonders for the good of the world. Some of these scientists have, no doubt, helped their governments in inventing powerful weapons of destruction. But they were forced to do so, much against their will. They were coerced into selling their souls to the Devil.

We must concede that those of our great scientists who have worked to this end, have really acted against the very spirit in which the universities were founded in the days of old. Most of these universities were founded in the Middle Ages in the wake of the Revival of Learning in Europe. In those times, the universities were the homes of 'sweetness and light'. They broadened the outlook and refined the tastes of the young men who flocked to their portals. There was, among the scholars, a feeling of love and brotherhood. That is why the universities of Oxford and Cambridge were founded in small country towns in the midst of the quiet beauties of Nature. Such were also the universities of Taxila and Nalanda in our country. For this reason the ideal university of our day should be a quiet seat of learning, 'far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife'. We expect to find in them a noble band of savants who will give unto the world the light of knowledge and the sweetness of culture. From the universities should come out, year after year, bright and talented scholars who will work not only for the refinement of their own tastes, but also for the uplift and enlightenment of their country. They should remember that they are not merely the architects of their fates. They are the builders of a nation and the torch-bearers of that great and glorious future, when all the world will be a happy family of nations. That will be the age when wars will be unknown and men and women, all the world over, will live in peace as brothers and sisters in the kingdom of God. The education, training, and enlightenment of such young men and women is the true function—the real ideal—of a university. The

object of a university is not to turn out thousands of graduates year after year. There is no use swelling the roll of graduates with a thin veneer of culture. The true ideal of a university is to send out to the world bands of young men and women who will look upon themselves as the light of the world and live, work, and die in the faith that they are working for the good of their brothers and sisters all over the earth.

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### ADVANTAGES OF A UNIVERSITY CAREER

Universities are seats of learning. In ancient times there were no printed books. There was a brotherhood of great savants and scholars, who attracted young learners from all parts of the world. Bands of devoted scholars had to travel thousands of miles to hear the lectures of these learned men. History tells us that the great Chinese pilgrim, Hiuen Tsang, visited the University of Nalanda in the seventh century A. D., and studied there for some time. But the invention of printing has brought about a wonderful change. There are printed books on all subjects, which one may read whenever one likes. The best of these books are the works of great scholars who have rendered memorable service to the advancement of learning. Indeed, as Carlyle has observed, 'the true university of our days is a collection of good books.'

But modern universities are centres of reading, teaching, and research in many departments of learning. There are university professors and lecturers, who teach subjects in which they have specialized. They point out the ways in which the students should carry on their studies. From their vast experience, they recommend books which are not only most readable, but also full of information and the results of the most up-to-date researches in every branch of study. That is the great advantage of a university career.

There are great persons, here and there, who have never been at a university, as they are men of genius who are above all universities. They are God-gifted men who appear in the world, at very rare intervals, and give to us the light of knowledge, wisdom, and truth. Such was Rabindranath Tagore in our country. Such was Shakespeare, the greatest dramatist of the world. Such were Marconi, Benjamin Franklin, and Michael Faraday. But the vast majority of men require the help and guidance of a university to mould their career. They require the help of teachers to select for them the best things in every

subject and explain them fully and clearly. These teachers create in our boys a taste for learning, and fill their hearts with the love of knowledge. And they help many a student to choose for himself a career in life—a career for which he is well qualified by his nature, tastes, and talents. And we know that success or failure in life depends largely on the right choice of a career. That is why, in every university, we come across a devoted band of scholars, who are carrying on researches in subjects in which they have specialized. In our country, a brotherhood of eminent scholars and scientists have worked and won memorable success under the inspiring guidance of the late Sir P. C. Ray and Sir Jagadish Chandra Bose. World-renowned savants and teachers like the late Prof. Bhandarkar and Sir Jadunath Sarkar have inspired scholars who have thrown a new light on the culture and civilization of ancient India. They have discovered the ruins of Harappa and Mohenjodaro, and traced the history of India to a period six thousand years ago. They revealed to the world the edicts of Asoka, and the immortal carvings of Ellora and Ajanta. So, universities are fountains of learning and inspiration to many talented men, who have not reached the giddy heights of genius.

There is another reason why a university career is of great help to young men. Every university has been invested with the power of examining students to test their fitness for higher studies. They have the right to confer degrees on those who have reached a standard of knowledge set up by the university. Every candidate for research work, profession of teaching, and public office, must have a university degree to qualify himself for appointment. He may not even receive advanced teaching in medicine or engineering, if he has not shown merit by passing the Intermediate Examination in Science. A young man who aspires to join the profession of law has to take his bachelor's degree before he is allowed to attend his lectures in law. So, the university is the gateway of knowledge that leads to success and prosperity in life. In receiving the honorary degree of D. Litt. from the University of Calcutta, Rabindranath Tagore observed that, never before in his life, had he entered the portals of the university. And he raised a ripple of laughter, when he said that he had earned nothing more from the university than the borrowed feathers in which he was appearing on that solemn occasion. A man like Rabindranath may sneer at his borrowed feathers. But they are most helpful to a useful career in life to the majority of our students. The man who passes his M. A. Examination with a first class and leaves the university with a gold medal is at once recognized as a brilliant scholar, and gets a good start in life. The higher the

degree, the greater the glory and fame he enjoys in life. The laurels on his brow never fade.

But there are young men who, for reasons beyond their control, are denied the blessings of a university career. They may learn much with their own talent, industry, and passion for knowledge. But they will have to struggle, for long years, before their merit is appreciated and they are rewarded for their labours.

Moreover, every student of the university works in the midst of a cultural atmosphere. He comes into contact with many brilliant students and eminent scholars of the East and the West. He is encouraged in his studies by a spirit of healthy rivalry. He takes part in sports and social entertainments. He joins theatricals, social gatherings, and inter-collegiate debating and recitation competitions. This is how he receives the blessings of culture, refinement, and knowledge. And he makes not only a good scholar but also an excellent actor, debator, and brilliant speaker. It is this training which enables many a student to take a leading part in the social and political advancement of his country. Indeed, the university teaches us that a student of today is the leader of tomorrow.

But there are exceptions. Shakespeare, Bernard Shaw, and Charles Dickens were not university men. In our country Rabindranath Tagore outshone the very best scholars of our university, and dazzled all the world by the splendour and brilliance of his genius. But men like him are exceptions that prove the rule.

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### LITERARY VS. SCIENTIFIC EDUCATION

Education is the crown and glory of life. It means the harmonious blending of all the qualities of head and heart. It is not only the training of the intellect, but also the refinement of our thoughts, feelings, and manners. A really educated man is also a great gentleman.

Literature and Science play an important part in our education. There are men who have qualities that make them eminently fit for the study of science. There are also young men who are more inclined to literature than to science. But we should remember that a fairly general knowledge of a large

number of subjects is needed for the advanced study of science or literature.

We may come across bigoted scientists who think that there is no other subject of study so interesting and useful as science. They cry down the study of arts and letters. But they are very much mistaken. They do not realize that they can neither study good books on science nor impress their ideas clearly on the minds of their readers, unless they have a taste for literature. This proves that, in our educational career, we cannot neglect the study of either science or literature up to a certain stage. The time for specialization comes when we have at least some knowledge of literature, history, geography, mathematics, and the sciences.

Science gives us the qualities of observation and accuracy and makes us more practical. It trains the eyes and the senses to see and feel the beauty of every little thing in Nature. It also teaches us to be patient, watchful, and confident. There have been great scientists who devoted years of patient toil and single-minded devotion to their ideal. For a long time, they failed to reach their goal. To all appearances they had simply wasted their labours. Many friends and foes laughed and jeered at them. Yet, they toiled on, and their labours were crowned with glory in the fulness of time. Newton had to work for years and years before he discovered the Law of Gravitation. A band of selfless devotees of science paved the way for the success of Marconi, when he made the wireless a means of communication between Europe and America across the Atlantic. Columbus begged for long years from door to door, before he was able to sail on the high seas in search of worlds unknown. He sailed with only three ships—ships which may well be described as large boats in our day. He was disappointed for a long time, but he was never disheartened. He sailed on and on, but no land was sighted for months. His supplies ran short, his sailors revolted, and his hopes were sinking. Yet, he struggled manfully and discovered America. This keen power of observation, careful study of all our surroundings, and wonderful patience are qualities that are fostered by science. Moreover, it fills us with faith and hope.

There are great thinkers who have told us that science is hostile to religion. They think that men of science care only for the things of the world, and have no interest in the things of the spirit. To them, all scientists are men who are dead to noble feelings and the beauty and mystery of Nature. Wordsworth describes a botanist as a fingering slave who can botanize on his mother's grave. But to our mind, a true scientist can never be hostile to religion or philosophy. His knowledge of

science enables him to pry into the mystery of Nature, and enjoy not only the beauty of the rivers, lakes, hills, and streams, but also the vast and boundless oceans, and the wonderful and everchanging colours of the sky. His study of Nature enables him to feel the presence of Nature's Creator in every object of beauty. That is why Metaphysics has been called the Queen of Science. We must study Nature with the help of science, before we can realize the mystery that underlies all the creations of God. It is science that enables us to travel from the known to the unknown, and discover new realms of light and beauty.

But we must also realize that the practical knowledge of science is not the only thing that goes to the making of a real scientist. He must study much and long before he can understand the theories and principles of science. He can never understand these principles without a fairly good knowledge of language and literature. It is his study of literature that will enable him to do full justice to the great works of distinguished scientists. Again, it is literature that will teach him to express his ideas clearly, distinctly, and vividly. Huxley, Darwin, and Sir James Jeans are not only great scientists, but also distinguished men of letters. They have made the principles of science clear, vivid, and interesting even to those who have little idea of the wonders of science.

In these days, there is no denying that science has worked wonders. It has, in a sense, bridged the high seas and conquered the realms of air. And it has linked the distant parts of the world with the help of the radio, the telephone, and television.

Yet, it is not given to every man to understand and appreciate the mysteries of science. But each and everyone can read a little of literature and enjoy its beauty. He may not be able to read high philosophy or the noblest poems of Wordsworth, Shelley, Tennyson, Browning, and Rabindranath Tagore. But he can enjoy much of the writings of these poets, with his little knowledge. These will divert his mind in idle hours and give him much consolation in the midst of the sorrows and sufferings of life. Moreover, the study of literature refines our tastes, elevates our thoughts and ideas, and enables us to love all mankind through our love of God.

That is why we must not neglect the study of literature in any sphere of knowledge. We may have our special subjects of study. We may choose to carry on higher studies in Science, History, Philosophy, or Fine Arts. But we must always cultivate the beauty, grace, and sweetness of literature in every sphere of knowledge and culture. In modern times, we should not quarrel over the superiority of science or literature. Both of

them are great and have worked wonders for the good of humanity. But the one should never be divorced from the other. The man of letters must have some knowledge of science, and the man of science must learn to enjoy the beauty of literature. Literature and Science are to march hand in hand. We must realize that, in different ways, they reveal the greatness and glory of God, who has created this wonderful universe and given to man the heart to feel, the voice to speak, and the eye to see the beauty, mystery, and imperishable glory of Nature.

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### THE EDUCATIONAL VALUE OF SPORTS

All over the world, men like sports. There was a time in our country when old men used to look down on sports. They thought that it was the duty of young men to read and only to read. That is why our universities sent out graduates with brilliant academic distinctions, who had no interest in anything else in the world except their studies. It was possible in those days to know a great scholar by his poor health, slender build, drooping gait, and thick spectacles. That is why most of these learned gentlemen could not shine in life. They spent their days in the cloisters, reading and lecturing to their students. They had no other interest in life. The result was that they pined away, and many of them died early in life. There were, no doubt, brilliant exceptions here and there. But they only proved the rule.

Yet, in England and other foreign countries, sports have been always encouraged and warmly admired. The English universities were the homes of many excellent cricketers and footballers. We have seen 'Oxford Blues', who have distinguished themselves in the sports played on our Calcutta grounds. It was a delight to see these cultured, healthy, and cheerful young men playing football, hockey, and cricket. They were very smart and active, and breathed the breath of life into those who came into contact with them. Indeed, it was the European professors of government and missionary colleges, who warmly encouraged their young students to take part in sports. But since that time, much water has flowed down the Ganges. India is now a free country and our young men desire to be more active, spirited, and cheerful than they ever have been. Football is the craze of Bengal and thousands of spectators crowd in and around the maidan, when a good football game is played. Cricket also attracts large numbers of men, young and old. There are also many ladies who attend

football and cricket matches in their colourful garments. It is a very healthy sign, and we should do everything in our power to foster this spirit among our young men. But, unfortunately, the number of active lovers of sport is very small. Most of our boys are fond of seeing football games in the afternoon and attending cinema shows in the evening. There are others who sit down on the ground after a game, and go on talking and quarrelling about it till eight o' clock at night.

There is also another thing wanting in India. Here, in this country, we have excelled in football and hockey, but we are not yet efficient in cricket. We have won the world trophy in hockey many a time, but in cricket we are still far behind. Barring one or two brilliant exceptions like Ranji and Mankud, we can boast of very few great cricketers in India.

Prince Ranji or the Jamshaheb of Nawanagar has distinguished himself all over the world. Gardiner offers a glowing tribute to his genius. He says that the Jam Saheb was the prince of a little state, but the king of a great game. Only recently Mankud was lauded to the skies in England. Indeed, Gardiner is quite right when he says that the vast masses of England know little about the great men of India, like our Banerjis, Gokhales, and Tagores. But all of them have seen Prince Ranji playing the great game of cricket. They love and admire this man of genius and cherish his wonderful feats in memory. This proves how dearly the English people love their games. And that is why they are so smart, active, and cheerful. Here are some of the educational values of sports.

But this is not all. Sports divert the mind with innocent pleasures. The love of sports is one of the purest and simplest forms of delight. There are scenes, on the stage or on the screen, which are most unhealthy, indecent, and immoral. These are brought in to attract people who have a morbid craving for all the evil things of the world. There are also scenes of horrible murders and the awful sufferings of men, women, and children after air raids. Some of these present sights which are too painful and heart-rending for men who love innocent pleasures. But there is no such thing in sports. There may be small incidents here and there, but they are few and far between. There is a spirit of healthy rivalry and a feeling of brotherhood among players in all parts of the world. Here in India there was never any feeling of bitterness between Indians and Europeans in the world of sports. The hand of friendship was there, and it was open to one and all to grasp it.

Respect for authority, strict discipline, and a sense of fairness among the players are some of the highest blessings of sports. A

real sportsman will always obey the voice of his captain, and bow to the decision of the referee or the umpire, when he is playing a game. The great ideal of the playground is never to faint or falter, never to lose heart, but to play on, play on, and play the game. In a word, every sportsman must play fairly, cheerfully, and manfully. He should never hit below the belt.

Sports are a healthy exercise of mind and body. They harden our limbs, fill us with vigour and energy, and teach us to take quick decisions. A single mistake may spoil the game. These are great qualities which go to the making of a real man. Many of the most brilliant and distinguished men of England had their early training in great schools like Eton and Harrow, where they learnt to 'play on, play on, and play the game'. We doubt very much whether Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru could ever have so much talent, activity, and energy, if he had not passed out of Harrow and Cambridge. And it is this spirit of obedience, loyalty, and love of the game in the field of sports, which teaches us to love our country, and to live, work, and die for her.

To our mind, education is never complete without a keen and lively interest in sports. Indeed, true education means an all-round culture of the many-sided interests and activities of life. A young man must not only read his books, but also play his game. If he is weak in health, he will be weak in mind. He will not be able to carry on his intellectual labours for long, and will not be able to do justice to his talents.

Last of all, our love of sports teaches us that we should never be disheartened or depressed by failures. A true sportsman will never lose heart. He will take a defeat manfully, and shake hands with his rivals. But he will take the lessons of his defeat to heart, and try to win the next time. He will always feel that life is a rainbow of many colours. It has its triumphs and failures. The long failures and sufferings of the people of England during the first four years of the World War did not depress their spirits. They went on fighting and fighting in a sporting spirit, and victory smiled on them in the end. Let us follow their example and play on, play on, play the game.

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## THE VALUE AND USE OF LIBRARIES

There are, in these days, many ways in which we may enrich our knowledge. We read in schools and colleges under the guidance of our teachers. We listen to the radio and hear the songs sung and speeches made by eminent men all over the world. We travel on land, sea, and in the air, see the glorious beauty of Nature all around us, and observe the men and manners of many countries of the world. We can see the historic cities and famous battlefields of the world. Those of us who are interested in English literature can go to England, the fountain of English undefiled, and make a pilgrimage to Stratford-on-Avon, where Shakespeare lived and died.

But reading in schools and colleges and travelling cannot give us all that we require for completing our education. We must supplement the knowledge gained from these sources by reading good books, and as many of them as possible. For this we must always keep in touch with good libraries filled with books revealing the noblest thoughts and ideals of the great poets, thinkers, and philosophers of the past and the present. We can hear the wise men of our own times. But we can come into contact with the great poets and thinkers of the past only by reading their books. Truly does the poet sing,

"My days among the Dead are past ;  
Around me I behold,  
Where'er these casual eyes are cast,  
The mighty minds of old ;  
My never-failing friends are they,  
With whom I converse day by day."

Indeed, a good library is the pleasure-garden of scholars. There they can enjoy the beauty of the finest flowers of knowledge in the East and the West, the past and the present.

Carlyle has told us that a true university of our day is a collection of good books. It is these books which can fulfil, more than anything else, our longing for knowledge. We learn very little in the few years we spend in our schools and colleges. The real life of the student begins when he leaves the university. Then and then alone can he read heartily, and with real pleasure. He is freed from the toils of examination. He can read, all life long, for the love of learning. He can cull the choicest flowers of poetry and romance, and enjoy their beauty, music, and loveliness. He can forget the cares and worries of life and fly, on the wings of his imagination, to a dreamland of beauty. And it is a good library that opens out before his eyes this magic world of eternal beauty and romance.

It is the knowledge gained from the study of a world of books that helps a scholar to become a great poet, thinker, or philosopher. It is in the library that he can realize how much he has yet to learn. He can feel, in the words of Tennyson's Ulysses, that

"All experience is an arch wherethrough  
Gleams that untrodden world,  
Whose margin fades for ever and for ever,  
As we move."

He is filled with a passion for travelling from this world to a world beyond, from the known to the unknown. This is, more often than not, the secret of the great poems of the world and the great discoveries of science. Many of our scientists have received their first suggestions from great books on the shelves of libraries. It is their work in libraries that have been developed, completed, and perfected by the observation of the mysteries of Nature, and repeated experiments in laboratories. It is, again, by reading of strange people in strange lands that great men have often been inspired to discover new lands beyond the seas or new worlds in the heavens above. Many of our sailors, mountaineers, and explorers had gleams of knowledge in libraries. It was by reading the famous books in the Khodabux Library of Patna that Sir Jadunath Sarcar, the great savant and scholar, felt deeply interested in the history of the Moghuls and the Marhattas. Beginning his career as a Professor of English, he became one of the greatest historians of India. His histories of Shivaji and Aurangzeb are classical works, of which all India is proud. It was his researches that enabled Elphinstone to cast a new light on the history of India during the Mahomedan period. And Vincent Smith's labour of love has given to us a world of knowledge about the history of ancient India.

But to the vast majority of our educated men and women, the library is not only a home of learning but also a fountain of joy. There are all kinds of readers interested in subjects that vary widely. They go to the library, not with the high ambition of writing great books or making great discoveries, but for the pleasure of reading. They are blessed men who do not like to waste their time in idle amusements. They feel happy and make others happy. Some of them read good novels and dramas and enjoy the charms of poetry. There are men who find great delight in reading the novels of Scott, Dickens, and Thackeray. There are others who love to read the stories of Sherlock Holmes. In our own country, every young man and woman loves to read the wonderful works of Rabindranath Tagore, with their rich and varied treasures of poetry, drama,

fiction, short stories, ballads, songs, literary and political essays, and what not? We have heard of the myriad-minded Shakespeare. But Rabindranath is equally great, and his appeal is much wider.

Indeed, a good library, with its splendid collection of books, broadens our outlook on life, and makes us happy, contented, and peaceful citizens of the world.

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### CHOICE OF BOOKS

Books are the best friends of man on earth. Our friends among men may not always be true and faithful to us. They may change with the change of time. But the books we have read will be always with us. They will give us peace, solace, and joy, so long as we live. And they will also be loved and admired by our children when we are gone. Truly does the poet sing,

"My never-failing friends are they,  
With whom I converse day by day."

It is often said that a man is known by the company he keeps. But it may also be said that a man is known by the books he reads. That is why we should be very careful in choosing our books. There are books and books, from the penny-thrillers to books on science, religion, and philosophy. We have to pick up, from among them, books that will increase our knowledge and refine our tastes. It will be found that some of us have taste for literature, and some for history, mathematics, or science. Naturally we shall be very eager to read books that appeal to our tastes. A student of literature will find pleasure in reading the writings of the greatest poets, dramatists, and novelists of the world. A lover of history will read all the great histories of the East and the West. A mathematician will read the works of Laplace or Newton. But the choice of subjects can be made only after we have reached a certain stage. Before we think of the books we should read, we must have at least an elementary knowledge of quite a number of useful and interesting subjects. We shall have to know the broad outlines of history and geography. We must know the elements of mathematics, geography, and the natural sciences. This is the work that must be done when we are at school. The books that we read in schools will be selected by our teachers. The government of our country have set up Text-Book Committees and Boards of Secondary Education to prepare a list of books, in every subject, that will be suitable for our boys and girls. But, unfortunately, the decisions of these

bodies are not quite reliable or above board. Yet they are of some help to the schools in making their choice. But our boys and girls should also be encouraged to read at least some books beyond the courses of studies laid down for them. In this respect, their teachers should help them in choosing books which will appeal to their tastes.

The real difficulty will arise when they leave school and come to college for higher studies. Here they enjoy a good deal of freedom and can read any books they like after college hours. But they must take care to choose good books—books that will give them not only joy but also the light of knowledge. In our days, books are springing up like mushrooms all over the country, and the world has been deluged with books, from end to end. So, in choosing his books, a young reader is often bewildered. He is like a man groping in the dark.

It may, therefore, be of some interest to offer them a few words of advice. In the first place, they should go in for the classics of every land. These are books written by great poets and thinkers. They have been loved and admired by readers from age to age. They have stood the test of time and given delight to generations of readers. It is now admitted by one and all that they are the choicest gems of literature. That is why each and every advanced student of literature should at once read his Homer, Dante, Shakespeare, and Milton, first of all. Here in India they may read the Ramayana, the Mahabharata, and the immortal dramas of Kalidasa and Bhababhuti. A student of Bengali literature may safely turn to the poems of Rabindranath Tagore, Michael Madhusudan Datta, Nabin Chandra Sen, and the brilliant novels and humorous essays of Bankim Chandra Chatterjee. It is these great writers who will give him a glimpse of the beauties of literature, increase his knowledge, and refine his tastes.

He will then be able to divide the sheep from the goats—the good books from the bad. He will read books that are really interesting, and throw away many others that are dull, lifeless, or frivolous. And in his desire to enrich his knowledge, he will have to read many books that are fairly good, though they have not been able to reach the dignity or excellence of the classics. Some of these books he will read carefully. But there are many others to which he will have to give a hurried reading. Again, there are books at which he simply glances to see what they contain. Francis Bacon has rightly observed, "Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested."

In the course of our studies, we shall have to read many kinds of books. Some of these books are very serious, and some of them are light reading. It will be wrong for us to give all our

time to the reading of books that deal with the most serious problems of life—books that reveal the mysteries of science, religion, and the philosophy of life and death. We must also read lighter books that tell us interesting stories, or poems that can be read and enjoyed by one and all. These are needed for our mental recreation, just like playing, walking, gardening, or singing. A student of English literature should turn, at times, from his Shakespeare, Milton, or Burke, to Goldsmith's 'Deserted Village', Gay's 'Beggar's Opera', or Sir Walter Scott's 'Lay of the Last Minstrel'. He may also turn from his Dickens and Scott to the light novels of Robert Louis Stevenson.

But, at any rate, he must read good books—books that teach us to be wise, and give the purest joy to those who love them. He should remember the words of Milton, "A good book is the precious life-blood of a master-spirit, embalmed and treasured up on purpose to a life beyond life."

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### CHOICE OF CAREER

The choice of a career is one of the most difficult problems of life. A little child learns his first lessons from the mother. Then he grows older and older and comes under the care of his teachers and elders. But if he is watched carefully, it will be found that he has his likes and dislikes. In a word, he is forming a taste of his own slowly and silently. That is why Wordsworth tells us that 'child is father of the man'. In his famous 'Ode on the Intimations of Immortality', he thinks that the child has glimpses of a happier and brighter world than our own. He has glorious visions of God and Heaven in childhood, that fade away when he grows into a man. At any rate, when he reaches boyhood, he seems to make his choice among the many things that he sees in the world around him. He loves some men more than others. He is shy or bold, active or indolent. He likes music and acting, or he is more interested in lively sports. There are boys who love the playground more than reading. Again, we have also heard of boys and girls who are more interested in drawing the pictures of their teachers in exercise-books than in reading and writing. Similarly, many boys are fond of swimming or rowing in boats.

We should take note of these tendencies and guide the boys and girls in our care on the right lines. But, in our country, we compel each and every boy to go through the same course of studies, without caring to see whether he is fit for it or not. We should, of course, see to it that he acquires an elementary

knowledge of a number of subjects, without which he will not be able to carry on higher studies. But even then we must make exceptions. It is no use pulling a little boy through the School Final Examination, when he is not in the least interested in general education. He should be allowed to study music if he has the ear to listen, and the voice to sing. He should be sent to a School of Arts if he is fond of drawing pictures. Similarly, the boy who loves the playground may turn a good sportsman. The same thing should be done with a boy who is fond of swimming and rowing. Such a boy may fail in his School Final Examination, but he makes a good sailor. There would never have been so many failures at our School Final and University Examinations, if the tastes and talents of a large number of boys and girls had been allowed to flow in the right channels.

We may leave aside men of genius who come to the world with wonderful talents and powers that are beyond the dreams of man. They need not go to college and school. They have a God-gifted vision, and a right instinct of their own. They can see all things clearly and unfold their real meaning. They can sing the glory of God and man as no one has ever done. They make wonderful discoveries that startle all the world. Such were Shakespeare, Milton, Shelley, Kalidas, and Rabindranath Tagore. Such were Sir Isaac Newton, Raphael, and Napoleon Bonaparte. These men were great, not only for their splendid gifts, but also for their power of knowing beforehand what was the work in life for which they were fit. It was their brilliant intellectual powers and the right choice of the sphere of work, that raised them far above the rest of mankind.

But among men, who are less inspired, there are some who make a right choice of profession. They make the best use of their gifts, exercise them in the right way, and win the prizes of life. Such were men like George Washington and Abraham Lincoln. And such are, in our day, Winston Churchill, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, and many other leaders of men. They are great, though they can never reach the dizzy heights of Shakespeare, Milton, and Rabindranath Tagore. It was a right instinct in Maharsi Debendra Nath Tagore, to keep his son away from school, give him every liberty to read what he liked, and to travel from land to land to see and enjoy the varied and glorious beauty of Nature.

It is only the seeing eye of Rabindranath Tagore and his ear for harmony that enabled him to describe the splendid scenery of East Bengal so vividly, and in a language which is unique and unrivalled in its sweetness and melody. That is why his poetry is a wonderful blending of light, colour, fancy,

and harmony. Shakespeare would never have been what he was if he had not left Stratford-on-Avon to seek his fortune in London. In the same way, Newton would not have been a world-renowned scientist, but for the love and indulgence of his grandmother.

That is why it is the solemn duty of parents and teachers to take great pains in helping a young man to choose his career before it is too late. His peace, happiness, and prosperity in life depend on the choice of a career.

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### EXAMINATION—ITS GOOD AND EVILS

Examination has its good and evils. It is a terror to the vast masses of students in our schools and colleges. They think that it is, more or less, a game of chance and not a test of real merit.

There is a good deal of truth in what they think, but not the whole truth. It is a severe strain on the health and intellect of thousands of examinees, who must be prepared to answer, at a time, questions on a fairly long list of subjects they have studied in two years. Many of the students cannot stand this strain and fail to do well in their examinations. The result is that the majority of these boys and girls fail to pass, and come out of this ordeal with a broken heart. This means a huge wastage of human labour, year after year, and a heavy drain on the resources of their parents and guardians. It cannot be said lightly that all these unfortunates are really worthless and unfit for university examinations. They are mostly sons and daughters of poor parents, who can hardly make two ends meet. Many thousands of them cannot afford to buy a cart-load of books. They read in private colleges where a small number of teachers have to lecture to classes of one hundred and fifty students or more. This is a severe strain on the teachers who have to shout at the top of their voice to make themselves heard. Moreover, they have to go through a heavy course of studies, prescribed by the university. The poor teacher has to pick up likely questions, and prepare his pupils for the examination. There are students who commit all these things to memory without understanding a word of what they are reading. Moreover, the questions set by the university, in recent years,

are often obscure and bewildering. The object of an examination is to see how much a student knows, and not how much he does not know. It is intended to test whether a student has a general knowledge of the subjects of study. But in our university, the examiners and paper-setters vie with each other in their efforts to catch the students tripping, and running them down somehow or other. That is why many thousands of our boys and girls fail to pass, and there is a huge wastage of labour and money. Surely, this has a most depressing and demoralizing influence on the students of our schools and colleges. It is for this reason that, in the big private colleges of Calcutta, the teachers are expected to act as coaches for leading students to the examination hall. There is no accommodation for such a large number of students in most of the colleges, and the number of well-paid teachers is very small. They cannot give regular tutorial classes to their boys and teach them carefully. The boys, in their turn, have no way out of it but to cram, as best as they can, and take their chance at the examinations, when the time comes. There is another great evil which has infected the system of examinations in this country. There is a world of difference between one examiner and another. We have a large number of examiners for each paper under one Head-Examiner. Within our knowledge, the same paper has scored thirty marks in the hands of one examiner, and sixty in the hands of another. In other words, one and the same candidate deserves first class marks in the opinion of one examiner, and fails with another.

Moreover, examination often gives undue advantage to students who are well-to-do. Sons of rich men get the help of tutors, who are well trained in the art of pulling their pupils through the university examinations. Indeed, many of the poorly-paid teachers of private colleges take up a number of private pupils to keep their heads above water. For this we have to thank the generous public, our benevolent government, and a ruinously expensive administration.

Last of all, examinations breed, at times, a spirit of selfish rivalry among students. Those who are eager to compete and take the highest places are very unwilling to help their fellow-examinees. They forget the feeling of brotherhood in the glamour of examinations. In a word, examination-system in India is not very often a real test of merit.

But examinations are very useful, if they are conducted on right lines. In all the great universities of the West, examinations are held by terms. This gives the boys enough time not only to read but also to take regular physical exercise, which is needed for their health and energy. A healthy

mind can only grow in a healthy body. But the student who longs to do well in the examinations of our country has to prepare, digest, and disgorge a heavy course of two years at one time. This is a severe strain, not only on his health but also on his brain. That is why, in our country, a good scholar is often a sickening sight. He is a lean, thin, and bloodless creature with spectacles on his nose. He has no joy in life, and is often rather cold and stiff in his manners. Even his intellect is impaired by a most inhuman system of examination. He loses the power of original thinking and the saving grace of wit and humour. That is why the entire system of examination should be changed. The courses of study should be simplified, and split up and spread over three years. And examinations should be held every six months. In this way, the boys will be able to read more thoroughly, and understand clearly what they read. And at the end of their terms at the university, they will prove worthy of their mettle. They will then be young men beaming with the light of knowledge and the joy of life. They will not be turned into 'bookful blockheads ignorantly read'. Yet, with all their failings, examinations keep the students at their books. They may not learn much, but they learn at least something which is better than nothing. Moreover, no better alternative to examinations has been found up to this time. So, every effort should be made to make them useful, interesting, and liberal.

As we have suggested, examinations should be held in compartments. Every examination should have a *viva voce* test. The examinee will have to answer questions put to him orally. This will be a good test of his smartness, ready wit, and general knowledge.

Our schools and colleges must have a much larger number of teachers, so that they may give regular tutorial exercises to the students in small batches. And the results of these regular tests should be taken into consideration in sending the boys up for university examinations.

All these are reforms that may be carried on easily with help from the state and men of wealth and affluence. If they will, they can reform the entire system of university education, and give to our boys and girls the light of knowledge and the blessings of health, wealth, peace, and prosperity.

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## STUDENTS AND THE CALL OF COUNTRY

In these days our students are taking a keen and lively interest in the social and political problems of their country. This is, no doubt, a sign of life and a growing sense of duty and responsibility. But there is a limit to everything, and no serious work can be done without preparation. That is why our students will do well to remember that their first and foremost duty is to read. Our sages have told us that, to young learners, study is as sacred as religion. It is work and worship.

Youth is the seed-time of life. This is the period of life when boys and girls are easily impressed by the influence of events happening around them, from day to day. If anything goes wrong at this time, it will be so all life long. Again, it is also very difficult to mend one's ways in the advanced years of life. That is why every young learner should read hard and try to learn things carefully, correctly, and diligently.

A peasant must sow his seeds in time, so that he may be able to reap a good harvest. Again, he has to sift these seeds laboriously before they are sown. Otherwise, he will be shocked and disappointed when he sees ~~tares~~ growing among wheat. Such is the duty of teachers and students. A student must not only read hard, but also try to understand what he reads. He should listen to every word spoken by his teacher; think on every word written in his book, and try to grasp the real meaning of each and everything he has read and heard. He should never nod his head, until he has understood a thing clearly.

But we are pained to see that the love of politics often keeps vast numbers of students away from their studies. For many days in the year now, students stay away from their classes at the call of men who have no interest in their education and well-being. They are led astray by the speeches of men with tall tongues. Labour strikes are almost invariably followed by strikes in schools and colleges. Little boys are induced to leave their schools and march along the streets of Calcutta, carrying the banners of political organizations and shouting slogans which have no meaning for them. But this is a wrong way of leading the students. It is surely desirable that, during their days at college or school, a student should devote himself to his studies, first and foremost. He should realize that his college is not a forum for political agitation, and his parents, guardians, and teachers are the best persons to guide him.

Every student should remember that he must be well-prepared to play his part in the public life of the country. He must study literature, history, geography, and the general principles of

economics and political philosophy. He must also have an elementary knowledge of the sciences. Without a fairly good idea of these things, he can never serve the country and become a real leader of men. He must work and study, all life long, if he desires her honour and glory. He must also be prepared to toil, hard and long, and sacrifice his own happiness and comfort for the good of the country. At the end of his educational career, he will have to go out among the poor villagers, relieve their sufferings, and teach them to work for the country. It is the duty of every educated man to preach to the masses the gospel of work and the dignity of labour. Man, he knows, must earn his bread in the sweat of his brow. The days of living in peace and indolence and dreaming dreams are gone by. It is time to study, to think, and to work for the good of humanity. It is a duty which is binding on poets, philosophers, men of science, and the ministers of the state as well. The budding poet should leave the bustle and tumult of the city and go out to the countryside to see and enjoy the beauty and loveliness of Nature. It is this feeling which is embodied in Keats's sonnet, 'To One Who Has Been Long in City Pent'. It is this feeling which runs through the poetry of Wordsworth, Shelley, Byron, and the brilliant galaxy of poets who have given their light to the world. The very best poetry of Rabindranath Tagore was written during the years spent in East Bengal, on the bosom of the Padma. The philosopher must look to Nature for light and inspiration. The man of science must study Nature closely to probe into the beauty and mystery of creation.

The Indian who desires to dedicate his life to the service of the country, must know something about the condition of the crops in the different parts of the country, the menace of drought, flood, and famine, and facilities for irrigation. In a word, he must study very carefully the problem of agriculture in India and the condition of the tillers of the soil, if he is to be of any use to the state or to the people of his country. Politics is not a bed of roses. A sincere patriot must be armed, not only with rifle and sword, but also with knowledge. A young man who chooses a military career must have a good general knowledge of history, geography, and mathematics, before he receives a commission in the army. Armchair politicians and noisy rabbles are not an asset, but a burden to the country. Every student must equip himself fully for his career in life. He should remember the well-known words of Dr. Johnson that, more often than not, patriotism is the last resource of a scoundrel. In fact, there is a good deal of truth in the words of this wise man. That is why all of us should love our country sincerely and be true patriots. For this we require knowledge, culture, courage, self-sacrifice, and passionate love of liberty. These are the acid

tests of patriotism. Indeed, the man who is wanting in these qualities is not a patriot, even though he may bask in the sunshine of official favour and patronage. These are the things which a student should remember before he becomes the standard-bearer of a party or its leader.

Last of all, it is the sacred duty of each and every student to remember that he must dedicate his life to the service of the motherland.

The poet must sing of the glory of our heroes and heroines. The philosopher must teach his countrymen the moral values of things that we see around us in life. The man of science must dedicate the fruits of his labours to the service of the motherland. And the soldier must fight valiantly and even die for the honour and freedom of his country. There should rise, from among the ranks of our students, young men who will toil for the poor, give bread to those who are starving, distribute medicines among men who are ailing, and nurse the sick and the wounded in hospitals. Their education should teach them that, in serving the poor and toiling millions of India, they are doing the work of God. 'He who giveth to the poor lendeth to the Lord.' In a word, they must be true servants of God in thought, word, and deed.

We may not conclude without reminding our boys of the memorable words of Sri Arabinda to the students of National College in Bengal long years ago. He told his students, 'I wish to see some of you becoming great—great not for your own sakes but to make India great—to enable her to stand up, with head erect, among the nations of the earth, as she did in the days of yore, when the world looked up to her for light. Even those who are poor and obscure, I want to see their very poverty and obscurity devoted to the motherland. Work that she may prosper, and suffer that she may rejoice.'

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### STUDENTS AND POLITICS

Aristotle once said that man is a political animal. Try as he may, he can never keep away from the currents and cross-currents of politics. He may not be able to think clearly or rightly, and he may not take an active part in the social or political advancement of his country. But he is sure to feel interested in the world around him, though he may not know anything about the general principles of politics or economics. He may not be able to discuss them in learned societies, but he is sure to feel their influence even when he happens to live in a

remote village, far from the stir, bustle, and noises of the city. If this is true of the man in the village, it is truer of the students of our schools and colleges. These schools and colleges are generally found in cities, towns, and important villages. There the students hear the speeches made by the leaders of the country, read of them in newspapers, or at least hear of them from their friends and neighbours. Little boys do not understand politics at all, as they have read nothing about it. It is only the students of the upper classes of schools, who read the outlines of public administration. So, all their interest in politics is based on what they have heard from others. That is why they are often carried off their feet by slogans without caring to know what they mean. It is a common sight in the cities and towns to see a number of wily men drawing the boys out of their schools, and marching them in a procession, carrying banners and shouting slogans on the way. Similarly, there are leaders among college students who go on strike every now and then, take out processions, and hold meetings, in which fiery speeches are made and cheered by the audience. The number of working days in our colleges has been cut short by frequent interruptions to studies for political reasons. The appalling failures in university examinations are largely due to the serious dislocation of work in these hard days, when parents and guardians have to make great sacrifices for giving education to their boys and girls.

We do not agree with those who think that our students must not be allowed to take any interest in politics. There is no doubt that they should read carefully and learn the general principles of economics and politics. In colleges there may be useful discussions on political subjects in debating societies. But thus far and no further. Students should never allow themselves to be dragged into the muddy whirlpool of party politics. It is very often a dirty, difficult, and dangerous game. That is why every student should remember that it is his first and foremost duty to read and think freely. And it is only when he has completed his education at the university, that he should take an active part in politics. But even then he will have to spend years in working under the guidance of old and experienced leaders. It was under the care of Sir Pherozshah Mehta that great men like Gopal Krishna Gokhale and Muhammed Ali Jinnah received their earliest training in politics. In Bengal, many of our leaders of today took their lessons in politics at the feet of Surendranath Banerjee and Chittaranjan Das. Many of our young men are lured by the thrilling game of politics, but they do not know that there are many pitfalls and danger-zones on the way. Our hearts bleed when we think how many young men have ruined their careers and lost their lives at the instigation

of men who had their own axes to grind. There are ambitious men who have never had the true interests of the students at heart. Under their influence, many young men forget that they must prepare themselves for a political career through long years of study and devotion to duty. That is why a student should never take an active part in politics. He should remember that there is yet much to learn, and he knows little of the world around him. He should see that the great public men of India and England rose to eminence after long years of study, training, and struggle. Most of them are brilliant scholars—men who are fitted by their wisdom, learning, and eloquence, to lead their countrymen. Great leaders like Surendranath Banerjee, Chittaranjan Das, and Subhas Chandra Bose were not made in a day. We are simply to read their speeches and think of their services to the country, to feel how learned, hard-working, and self-sacrificing they were. The life and writings of Mahatma Gandhi and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru tell the same tale.

Our ancient sages have told us that reading is the true religion of students. To a real student, study is worship. That is why, during the years of his life at school and college, he should give his days and nights to his studies—studies in history, literature, science, politics, and indeed everything else that is needed for a sound education. And he should not only read but also think deeply of what he has read. Many of our ancient poets, philosophers, and scientists spent long years in studying under the guidance of distinguished savants in their *ashrams* amid the quiet and beauty of Nature. But for their patience, industry, and devotion to learning, they would never have been so great. And they would never be able to give to the world that sweetness and light, which alone can make life pure, happy, and sublime.

That is why our students should take their lessons in politics in colleges and the higher classes of schools. They should think of what they have learnt, and discuss about them with their friends and teachers. But they should remember that the time for leadership is not yet. A leader cannot rise in a day, as 'Rome was not built in a day.'

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## FRIENDSHIP WITH BOOKS

We love many things and make many friends in life. There are poets and philosophers, who are fond of reflecting on the beauty, loveliness, and mystery of Nature. There are men of science who watch the movements of the stars, and work, all life long, to wrest secrets from the bosom of Nature. There are great artists and sculptors who have adorned their lands with splendid towers and temples. But all of them have one great friend to give them joy and solace in the midst of their work. It is the books which every student of art, literature, and science loves for the pleasure of reading and advancement of learning.

The books we read embody the highest ideals and sentiments of the poets and philosophers of the world. They unfold the treasures of art, and the wonderful inventions of science. Every student of arts, science, and literature has to read many things, before he can attain perfection in his work. No doubt there are men of genius, who need not read much. They read little and it is their God-gifted vision and insight that enable them to enjoy and create things of beauty. But even they cannot do without reading—reading that gives them a glimpse of the vast world of knowledge, glimmering in the distance. It was said of Shakespeare that he had 'little Latin and less Greek.' But if we read the plays of Shakespeare carefully, we shall find that they reveal a wide range of reading. An incident in early life compelled him to leave Stratford-on-Avon, to seek his fortune in London. But there he read, in his own way, a good deal of history, drama, and tales of wonder and romance. He had read Plutarch's *Lives* of the great Greek and Roman heroes of old. He had read the tales of Boccacio and Ariosto. And he had read the Italian comedies and tragedies of those times. All these things are specimens of old literature. Most of them are dull and uninteresting to men of our times. But it is the genius of Shakespeare that has given life, colour, and beauty to these things. Shakespeare has taken the broad outlines of his dramas from old tales, histories, and plays. But he has turned them into wonderful works of art. He has made slight changes in the plots of these old plays, here and there. But he has created most of the characters and given them thoughts, feelings, emotions, and ideals, all their own. Who ever thinks of Marlowe's *Jew of Malta* in reading Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice*? Who ever thinks of Plutarch's *Parallel Lives* in reading *Julius Caesar*? And who ever thinks of Holinshed's *Chronicles* in reading *Macbeth*? The art of Shakespeare proves that even men of genius must read and enliven their reading with their magic spell and wonderful power of imagination. The poetry of Rabindranath has, behind it, a background of culture and refinement, coloured by the varied beauty

and grandeur of Nature and a most wonderful insight into human character.

A good book is also a never-failing source of joy and wisdom to every seeker of knowledge. It gives light and joy to the young man carrying on his studies, and to the teacher who has to lecture to his pupils. Nay more. It gives unspeakable delight and consolation to the scientist in his hours of rest. And it gives the light of truth and the power of utterance to the philosopher. It is a source of pleasure even to the humble peasant after the day's hard toil. There are vast masses of people in our country, who read or hear with joy the tales of the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. To these men, they are as sweet and sacred as the Holy Bible among the followers of Christ.

Books bring us into contact with the mighty minds of old. They enable us to read and learn how great men thought and lived in the past. They open up before us vast fields of knowledge, and give us a glimpse of the world beyond. It is this feeling that leads many a man to give his days and nights to the study of books. Indeed, as Carlyle tells us, the true university of our days is a collection of books. This idea has been revealed beautifully in Southey's well-known poem, 'The Scholar'. There the Scholar tells us,

"My days among the dead are past ;  
Around me I behold,  
Where'er these casual eyes are cast,  
The mighty minds of old :  
My never-failing friends are they  
With whom I converse day by day.

Indeed, our friends among men may fail us. We may miss them when we long for their company. We may be disappointed by them and cry out, like the poet,

"What is friendship but a name,  
A charm that lulls to sleep ?"

But the books we love are always with us. We may take them out of the shelves and read them at any time. They will give us joy and strength in the midst of our sorrows and sufferings. Indeed, there is no friendship like the friendship of books.

We read how Goldsmith was lying on a cot, with his hands thrust through the holes of a blanket, and reading a book when his creditor had taken away all he had. Indeed, it was books that heartened Dr. Johnson through many years of struggle and poverty. That is why there is no charm like the charm of reading, and no friend warmer, truer, and more constant than our books.

Yet, we must be always careful about the choice of books. In these days, libraries are filled with thousands of books of many kinds. But we must pick up the best of them and read them, not only for enjoyment but also for knowledge and wisdom. We must choose the right type of books, just as we must choose the right kind of friends. In making our choice, we should seek the help of our teachers and learned men, who have read and seen much of the world. The best thing is to read the classics—books that have become famous all the world over for their richness of thought and art of writing. By reading them we shall be able to form our tastes, and this will enable us to separate the wheat from the tares, and the sheep from the goats. And once we make our choice rightly, we shall find in them delightful companions who will give us joy and solace as long as we live.

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## MY FAVOURITE POET

I have read many a beautiful poem during my school and college days. I like poetry, as it is not only rich in thought, but also enjoyable for its beauty and music. And among the English poets I have read, I like Wordsworth most of all.

This is due to many reasons. In the first place, the poet describes the glories of Nature most vividly and beautifully. He tells us that all the beautiful things of Nature—the hills, the streams, the seas, the deep blue sky, and the smiling flowers—live and feel like us. When I joined my First Year Class at college, I read, first of all, Wordsworth's 'Lines Written in Early Spring.' There the poet gives us a bright and beautiful picture of natural scenery—the tufts of primrose in their green bowers and the birds playing and singing merrily. He also speaks of the 'budding twigs' that 'spread out their fans to catch the breezy air', and he echoes our own feelings when he sings that 'every flower enjoys the air it breathes.'

My next lesson at college was Wordsworth's charming poems on 'Lucy'—a simple village girl who lived beside the springs of Dove, and 'whom there was none to praise and very few to love.' This is how the poet describes the quiet life and tender beauty of this little girl :

"A violet by a mossy stone  
Half hidden from the eye !  
Fair as a star, when only one  
Is shining in the sky."

And how sweet and sad are the words in which the poet mourns the passing away of this lovely girl !

"She lived unknown, and few could know  
When Lucy ceased to be ;  
But she is in her grave and, oh,  
The difference to me !"

I had also read these poems when I was a little boy at school. But I could not feel their beauty and charm so deeply in those days. As I read them more and more at this distance of time, I feel that they are some of the finest poems of Wordsworth —poems which are so sweetly sad and beautiful.

In his lines addressed to the Cuckoo, Wordsworth gives us a new light. The cuckoo, he tells us, is a bird that can be rarely seen, though we can hear its song, all day long, with the burst of spring. In moments of happy forgetfulness, the poet does not know whether he should call the cuckoo a bird, or 'but a wandering voice.' The sweet strains of its melody remind him of the years of his boyhood, when the world seemed so strange, airy, and wonderful to him. He felt as if he was living in a dreamland, far away from the world of man. And have we not had the same feeling, in our childhood, when we ran after the moon and the stars and longed to see the cuckoo singing from among the leaves of trees ? This was the time of life when we felt that the world was all full of beauty, and life was all full of joy.

Before we read Wordsworth's sonnet, 'Composed Upon Westminster Bridge', our professor told us that it was one of the best poems of Wordsworth. He explained every line of it and spoke of its beauty and charm. And when we had read the poem thoroughly, we felt how wonderfully Wordsworth has described the beauty of London in early morning. He tells us that the sleeping city of London has a charm of its own. One can see, in these early hours, the vast city of London, with its ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples, open unto the fields and the sky. There are no clouds of smoke and dust to hide the beauty of the sky, nor are there any loud noises to disturb the peace of men sleeping in their homes. The waters of the river are clear and still, and they are gliding smoothly as there are no boats, launches, or steamships to ruffle their stream. The poet has never felt a calm so deep, nor has he ever seen valley, rock, or hill, looking more beautiful in glorious sunshine. Indeed, the deep silence of the city in early morning makes the poet cry out in the joy of his heart,

"Dear God ! the very houses seem asleep ;  
And all the mighty heart is lying still."

The charm of the poem is the charm of contrast—a contrast

between the noises of the city in daytime, and its unspeakable beauty and silence in early morning. The same feeling comes upon us when we look upon the sleeping beauty of Calcutta at dawn.

There is another aspect of Wordsworth's poetry which strikes us most vividly when we read such beautiful pieces as 'The Daffodils' or 'The Solitary Reaper'. It is the poet's wonderful power of cherishing in his memory every beautiful scene he has ever seen and the feelings awakened by it at the time. One day the poet was walking along the margin of a lake, when he saw a host of golden daffodils, fluttering and dancing in the breeze. It was a splendid sight that filled his heart with delight, as

'A poet could not but be gay,  
In such a jocund company.'

But he did not know, in the thrilling delight of the moment, how precious were these lovely flowers to him, and what a wealth of joy and solace they would bring to him in the years to be. That is why he sings,

"For oft, when on my couch I lie  
In vacant or in pensive mood,  
They flash upon that inward eye  
Which is the bliss of solitude."

Similarly, he listened, motionless and still, to the song of the 'Solitary Reaper' as he mounted up the hill. But as he tells us,

"The music in my heart I bore,  
Long after it was heard no more."

Lines like these prove that Wordsworth's mind was a happy dwelling-place of all beautiful sights and sounds.

It has been said of Wordsworth that he was the poet, philosopher, and priest of Nature. That is why he has not merely described the glories of Nature with the light, colour, and vision of a great artist. He has also unfolded before us the great lesson that Nature teaches all mankind—the lesson of love, piety, and humanity. In his 'Hart Leap Well' the poet tells how Nature mourns the cruel death of the poor, dumb, and helpless creatures of the earth. And he calls upon us,

"Never to blend our pleasure or pride  
With sorrow of the meanest thing that feels."

Again, he describes the Skylark as a

"Type of the wise who soar, but never roam,  
True to the kindred points of heaven and home."

I have heard of many great poems of Wordsworth from my teachers. But the few that I have read have made me one of the warmest admirers of this great poet of man and Nature.

## MY FAVOURITE AUTHOR

My favourite author is Charles Dickens. Not that he is the best or the greatest man of letters that England has ever known. His claims to greatness have been challenged by eminent critics, not merely in Europe, but also in England. According to one, he is a writer of 'imperfect, hazardous education'; in another's view, he is deficient in plot-construction; while a third, apparently an advocate of realism, finds that his characters belong to 'a world of his own rather than to this one.' But, inspite of all these defects, Charles Dickens has a most powerful appeal, all his own.

Wherein lies the secret of this appeal? How is it that a writer who has been assailed by many a learned critic can move the hearts of men not only in his own country, but also in lands beyond the seas? His appeal to the very heart of England may be explained away by saying that in his pages 'she recognized herself, and found a picture of herself that she loved to see'—a picture of England at her best. Without his love of justice and truth, however, Charles Dickens would never have impressed himself on his readers abroad. And these are precisely what he offers to the reading public. Besides, he speaks to the heart, if not always to the head. It is here that we have to look for the secret of the wide popularity enjoyed by Charles Dickens.

It is true that Dickens did not have much of schooling. An eager reader of works of fiction, the boy who from his early days found pleasure in reading the *Arabian Nights* and kindred tales, besides books of travel, could go no further than a day-school in Gibraltar Place. The misfortune that pursued the elder Dickens, involving him in pecuniary troubles, and eventually throwing him into the debtor's prison, deprived Charles of academic education quite early in life. But mother wit came to his aid, and the sad experiences of the boy as a labouring hind in a blacking factory, his familiarity with the inside of a pawn-broker's shop, his Sundays 'spent at home in the prison'—all these opened out before his eyes a new school, the 'School of London Streets.' It was here, in the streets of London, that Charles Dickens gathered his materials for the *Personal History of David Copperfield*—a story which is really an episode in the life of Charles Dickens himself. Upon the days of his childhood, he looked back with a feeling of bitterness and rancour rather unusual with him. But they had helped to make him feel for the underdogs,—the poor and the weak—because he too had had his cross to bear.

It is this autobiographical element in the story of *David Copperfield* that accounts for the irresistible attraction of the book. Lighted up with streaks of playful humour, in the doings and dealings of the 'incurable optimist', Mr. Wilkins Micawber,

the vivid experiences of David Copperfield mingle fact with fiction, and keep the reader spellbound. No less impressive is the story of little Emily and her kinsmen, most skilfully interwoven with the personal experiences of David Copperfield. The idyll of David and Dora, beginning in a note of the gayest comedy, passes beautifully into the last phase 'where the clouds dissolve in a rain of tears'. With irresistible pathos, the genius of Dickens depicts the closing scenes, which melt his own heart, and with it, the heart of his reader.

Charles Dickens had attained fame and fortune with the publication of the first number of the *Pickwick Papers*. This 'thrice-fortunate book' has, on the whole, remained 'the most general favourite of all his books.' *Pickwick*, it has been said, defies criticism. The adventures of Mr. Pickwick, the Chairman of the Pickwick Club, and his three colleagues, as they wander about 'investigating the source of the Hampstead ponds,' form the subject-matter of the book. But as the story develops, the character of Mr. Pickwick, truly lovable as well as laughable, develops with it. The latter part of the narrative reveals nearly all the varieties of pathos of which Dickens is a master. If there is nothing so humorous in the book as Sam Weller, neither is there in it anything more pathetic than the relation between him and his master. Can there be a farewell speech more touching than that of Mr. Pickwick? Here he tells us that, if he has done but little good, he has at least done less harm, and that none of his adventures will be other than a source of amusing and pleasant recollection to him in the decline of his life. And then, "God bless you all. Amen."

After making his readers merry with *Pickwick*, Dickens thrills them with *Oliver Twist*, presenting a picture of the 'dregs of life' 'in their loathsome reality'. Born in a parish workhouse, Oliver loses his mother soon after his birth. At the age of nine, he is deputed by the workhouse boys to go and ask the master for a little more gruel—an offence which costs him his shelter and places him in the hands, first of a coffin-maker, then of a cruel mistress, and next of John Dawkins. This man, again, introduces him to Fagin, a Jew, who keeps a gang of pick-pockets, thieves, and house-breakers. As he goes out under the charge of two boys, he sees them pick the pocket of Mr. Brownlow, and runs away. The hue and cry that follows leads to his arrest, his trial by Mr. Fang, the magistrate, and his fainting in the dock. Mr. Brownlow, however, has pity on him, takes him to his house, and treats him kindly, so much so that Oliver becomes gratefully attached to him. But the boy is again seen by some of Fagin's men, and taken to the Jew's den. This is the horrible picture of Oliver Twist as painted by Charles Dickens. His

unfailing power of sympathy, however, suggests a silver lining to the cloud. Ultimately the hero comes into a small property left by his father, and is adopted by Brownlow as his heir.

The design of *Oliver Twist* is, in every possible way, a sharp contrast to the design of *Pickwick*. A vein of horror runs parallel to the vein of humour. But in either case, the characters are men and not machines—living men, and no mere sketches. No wonder Tolstoy regarded them as his 'personal friends'.

*Nicholas Nickleby* shows how absurd it is to draw a distinction between imaginative romance and a realistic novel. Dickens is never so strong as when he calls up the real, and here is an instance to the point.

In the art of story-telling, Dickens has hardly an equal. And this applies not merely to *The Old Curiosity Shop*, a story of adventures, and *David Copperfield*, essentially a story of his own life, but to most of his novels. The best and most interesting among them are *Bleak House*, *Nicholas Nickleby*, *Great Expectations*, *Martin Chuzzlewit*, *Hard Times*, and *A Tale of Two Cities*.

In *A Tale of Two Cities*, Dickens takes it upon himself to illustrate a phase of the French Revolution, which he shows in the making as well as in a thing made. It is a novel with an excellent plot and characters drawn with the master-hand of a great artist. And the most splendid among them are the characters of the hero and the heroine. But even if we fail to appreciate the skill with which he constructs his plot or draws his characters, we cannot fail to be impressed by the vivid and picturesque description of the tyranny of the lords, the sufferings of the poor, the storming of the Bastille, the Reign of Terror that follows, and the chivalrous sacrifice of a gallant lover—a description which grips the heart and haunts it long after the book has been laid aside.

It is here, in this gift of story-telling, that Charles Dickens excels others. But this should not blind us to his charm as a humorist in a nation of humorists. In Dickens, humour is allied to pathos—a gift of his deep and broad sympathy. Nor can we afford to forget the variety and magnificence of his creation, the world of living men and women that appear in his novels, and his flexible style which is in harmony with his themes.

Not that Dickens is entirely free from defects. Some of these defects have already been glanced at. His mannerism has been a constant source of irritation to his readers. There are times when his love for the stage goes too far, and thus becomes a misfortune to him as an author and as a man. But, to our mind,

all these failings are redeemed by a humour, moral fervour, and a tender humanity which touches every heart and draws a tear from every eye.

Indeed, the author of *David Copperfield*, *Pickwick Papers*, *Oliver Twist*, and *A Tale of Two Cities* has his claims to enduring fame. These are based on his excellence as a story-teller, as a humorist who has blended laughter with tears, and as an artist who has built up characters that will live for ever.

In a word, he is a wonderful writer, 'whose art is like life, because, like life, it cares for nothing outside itself and goes on its way rejoicing.'

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### SOCIAL REFORM

We are living in restless times when man hardly thinks either of his religion, or of his duties and obligations to the society he lives in. Ours is a soulless and material civilization, and we hear all about us the parleys of princes and politicians, the hum of machines, and the roar of dynamos. In a word, it is an age of science, politics, and war. The Second World War came to an end after seven years of terrible bloodshed, and the United Nations Organization has been set up to keep peace between the nations of the world. Yet, war clouds are still hanging on the horizon, and we hear the roar of aerial bombers, and the booming of cannon everyday.

There are, indeed, great statesmen in the East and the West who are trying to devise means for preventing a global war, and settling international disputes by friendly meetings and consultations. They have still faith in personal contacts and conferences, and are hoping against hope. But very few of them have tried to go to the very root of the evil, and rid the world of the evils of bigotry, hatred, and violence. In other words, they have forgotten that social reform is the very foundation of political advancement.

Here in India, efforts are being made for long years now to remove the evils of caste, untouchability, and religious fanaticism. That is not a mere show or a canard to mislead unwary people. There have been great men in India who have believed in a religion of peace and love, and an enlightened society founded on the principles of justice, equality, and fraternity. Many a great man in the past devoted the labours of a lifetime to this ideal. The pioneer of this noble mission of love, charity, and forgiveness in our part of the country was Sri Chaitanya of hallowed memory. He was followed by Sri Ramkrishna and his

devoted disciple, Swami Vivekananda, who always preached the gospel of love, the fatherhood of God, and the brotherhood of man. There were also great social reformers like Raja Rammohan Roy, Keshab Chandra Sen, and Maharshi Debendra Nath Tagore, who, in their own way, tried to reform Hindu society, and to foster a feeling of brotherhood and equality between man and man. They had been working at a time when Hindu Society had almost turned into a citadel of conservatism. Many talented young men who had gone to foreign countries were outcasted, and some of them became Christians, to our shame. So, the liberalizing influence of these great workers saved Hindu society from the growing influence of Christianity—an influence that had captured the imagination and touched the heart of the great poet, Michael Madhusudan Dutt.

But it was Rabindranath Tagore and Mahatma Gandhi who realized, first of all, that a society based on inequality can never grow and live for ever. It was they who felt that no people who are divided among themselves can develop into a great nation.

The poet opened his school at Santiniketan, and there he preached the doctrine of love and equality. His protest against the tyranny of caste and his ideal of universal brotherhood in the kingdom of God have been voiced in many of his plays. His symbolical play, *Achalayatan*, caused a stir in Hindu society. This was followed by a number of dramas, like *Tapati* and *Visarjan* or *Sacrifice*. He denounces, with all his eloquence, man's lust of blood, and preaches the gospel of peace, love, and equality. In his great novel *Gora*, he protests against the bigotry and intolerance of men who pose to be ardent devotees of religion. He has been an unsparing and relentless critic of bigotry and intolerance everywhere—in Hindu society, Brahma Samaj, and every other sphere. In his *Katha-O-Kahini*, he tells the story of the sage Kabir who nursed a fallen woman dying of a deadly disease. In his love of mankind he was largely inspired by the teachings of Sri Chaitanya, and the writings of the great Vaishnava poets of old. He realized these principles in his heart of hearts, and expressed them in his inimitable poetry and romance. It will not be out of place here to observe that he has enlivened and beautified Vaishnava poetry by the radiance of his genius—a genius which was like a talisman that could turn every metal into gold.

Rabindranath was helped in this mission of love by Mahatma Gandhi. The Mahatma was not a poet, but he was an eloquent preacher of the cult of peace, love, and *ahimsa* or non-violence. He was also a farsighted statesman. He saw that India would never be able to take her place among the nations of the earth,

until all her people were united in bonds of love and charity. That is why, all life long, he appealed to the people of India to forget the differences of caste, religion, custom, and the hoary traditions of the past. He was the warmest and most valiant champion of the depressed classes, whom he called *Harijans* or children of God. He opened his *ashrama* to them, and lived and worked for them. Neither the taunts and jeers of his countrymen, nor the calumny of foreign tourists like Miss Mayo could make him deflect, in the least, from the path of honesty, integrity, and rectitude. He used to travel third class and live in *Bhangi* colonies on principle. And it was on the same mission of love that he went to Noakhali, and wandered from village to village amid the bitter, biting cold of winter. He had to cross many a stream and canal with his band of faithful followers, and walk miles and miles along miry tracks. It was a lonely mission, undertaken at a time when the whole country was seething with discontent and religious fanaticism. And during this weary journey, he was fond of hearing a famous song of Rabindranath sung by his companions :

\*     "If no one comes at thy call,  
        Do not falter, do not fall ;  
        Go thy way, long and lone,  
        Alone, alone, all alone."

He felt that the reform of society is the most essential condition of political advancement. India, he thought, would never enjoy the blessings of real freedom, until all her people were equal, not only in the eye of God, but also in the estimation of their fellowmen. He thought that, always and everywhere, one must build on a deep, firm, and lasting foundation. Like a true architect, a real patriot must begin to build at the base, and not at the apex. Similarly, we must educate the masses, teach them the principles of true religion, and sweeten their lives with the warmth of our love, charity, and tender humanity. This is the way to unity, to national progress, and to real independence.

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### THE VALUE OF PRINTING

The art of printing is one of the greatest blessings of civilization. China was the first country in the world to devise a novel mode of printing from wooden blocks. But the idea of using movable types occurred to Gutenberg of Germany in 1420. The first printing press in England was set up by Richard Caxton in the reign of Richard the Third, and the first book printed

\* Translated by the author.

by it was Malory's *Morte D'Arthur*, which has inspired some of the greatest poets of England. In India it was introduced by the missionaries of Serampore, and the first Bengali type was coined by a Bengali blacksmith of that town.

Before the advent of printing, it was the priests and missionaries who alone were the devotees of learning. In India many memorable books were written on palm-leaves by men who were not only blessed with learning, but also skilled in the art of neat, clean, and graceful handwriting. Even now there are beautiful manuscripts of ancient times preserved in the museums and institutes of classical learning, like the Government Sanskrit College in Calcutta, or the *tols* founded by learned pandits, in the quiet and peaceful surroundings of rural Bengal. And there were, in those days, men who were blessed with a wonderful memory. It was they who carried the tales of Indian chivalry from age to age, and land to land. There were wandering minstrels who sang the glories of Rama, Sita, Karna, Arjuna, and the other great heroes and heroines of India in every home, and inspired millions of men with their art of telling tales in sweet and melodious strains. We are told that the epics of Homer were sung by minstrels and handed down from generation to generation. In ancient times there were great universities in the East and the West, where learned savants delivered lectures that were heard by scholars from all parts of the world. But there were no printed books, such as we have today. Every year that passes sees the appearance of thousands of books in all parts of the world. They are never-failing friends, with whom we converse day by day. And we owe all this wonderful progress of knowledge, in our day, to the art of printing.

Books are written now-a-days and printed in hundreds and thousands on paper. A good book is printed in millions, and as many times as they are in demand. In these books the ideas and thoughts of great men are printed in clear and legible types, so that everyone may read them. That is why there are great men in our times, who have acquired vast learning without going to schools and colleges. It is this that enables the University and the Board of Secondary Education to make a careful choice of books for the use of our boys and girls.

There are, however, different types and varieties of printing. Books meant for children are printed on fine paper in bold types. They are illustrated by a large number of pictures, some of which are coloured. There are pictures which are a blending of two, three, or even four colours. These pictures cannot be printed in each and every press. They are reproduced

from coloured plates, and carved on copper or wood by eminent artists. These pictures can be printed by presses, that have the finest machinery, handled by able hands.

There are pictures in huge block letters that advertise plays staged in the theatres, or films shown in cinemas. They are used by circus parties, merchants selling their wares, and by rival political organizations on the eve of elections. Here again there are some presses which have foundries for making types and machines to print these things. They have also commercial artists in their pay, who sketch pictures for advertisements.

Addresses of welcome to great men are also printed in neat and elegant types on paper of high quality. There are many presses for quality printing in England, but in India their number is small. . .

Again, there are daily newspapers that are printed by rotary machines. They use linotype which is formed out of molten lead by the process of typewriting. There are lino-operators who compose many pages of newspapers very quickly. They go on pressing the buttons, making new types out of molten metal, which are neatly arranged in the order in which they are written.

The rotary machine used by *The Statesman* can print a paper of eighty pages at the rate of about one hundred thousand per hour. The circulation of the *Daily Mail* or *The Times* of England is beyond our wildest dreams. This is the most wonderful achievement of linotype, rotary press, and newsprints produced in billions of tons all over the world.

Sometimes, different kinds of types are used in printing the same books, according to the nature and importance of the subjects treated in them. This is seen in learned law-books, books on science, history, philosophy, and the like.

The discovery of printing has been a great boon to the world. But for it, literature, history, science, and philosophy could never have made such wonderful progress in modern times. It has preserved for us the richest treasures of literature and science. It has kept up the link between the past and the present. It enables us to have a glimpse into the ancient history of the world—the history of Asia, Europe, Africa, and America in the dim and distant past.

It has given the light of knowledge to men and women in every part of the world. Knowledge is no longer the privilege of a few learned scholars here and there. It may be won by any one who has not only talent and diligence, but also a high sense of duty.

It is, however, to be regretted that the advancement of printing has almost ruined the art of calligraphy. There were men in ancient times who could write neatly, clearly, and finely. Their writings and inscriptions are to be seen all over India. They are seen in ancient manuscripts which have been preserved with great care in our libraries and museums. They are revealed in the edicts of Asoka and the copper-plates and inscriptions of ancient India. But now-a-days, there is hardly any one who can write a good hand. We are living in an age of typewriting and printing. The manuscripts prepared by many a scholar are a terror to the press. And in our schools little or no attention is paid to handwriting. Only a few years ago, our girls could write very finely and clearly. But many of them have ceased to apply their minds to the art of handwriting. This is one of the evils of printing. That is why, we should see to it that excellent printing is seen side by side with excellent handwriting.

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### THE POWER OF THE PRESS

We are living in an age of democracy, which has been finely described by Abraham Lincoln as the government of the people, by the people, and for the people. And the voice of the people is heard from the press, the platform, and on the radio everyday. Indeed, so great is the influence of the press that it is often described as the Fourth Estate. A good newspaper, in our day, is read by millions of readers in every part of the world. Indeed, it is more formidable than bayonets to the rulers of lands.

The newspaper of today is not merely a carrier of news. It gives us news and views as well. So, it helps men to form opinions, lead movements, and organize parties. Every social, religious, or political institution has its own organ. Even Science, Engineering, Agriculture, Cinemas, Theatres, and Airways have their journals. But the most powerful of them all is the daily press, which is the strongest organ of public opinion. There is hardly any educated man in this country or elsewhere, who is not eager to learn the news of the world around him, the first thing in the morning. He waits eagerly for the coming of the newspaper-man. The power and influence of the press show how rapidly the world is changing. But in days long gone by, the vast majority of readers were content to read weekly newspapers. Macaulay tells us that very few people in the eighteenth century cared to read

the *Spectator*, which contained interesting pieces of news and articles written by Addison and Steele. In his inimitable language he writes, "To have the *Spectator* served up with bohea and rolls was a luxury for the few." But today even a porter in England must have a glance at his newspaper every morning. There are now world-famous journals, like the *London Times*, *Daily Mail*, *Manchester Guardian*, *New York Times*, and many others, that give news from all parts of the world, and mould public opinion by their editorial comments. They publish forceful articles on the world situation and home politics, and their views are accepted without question by vast millions of readers. Indeed, the common man is always eager for news, and he has no views of his own. He has not the learning, intelligence, and calmness of mind to think. He is the follower of a party, and the organ of the party is the keeper of his conscience. The result is that he seldom cares to listen to the voice of reason. More often than not, he is blown about by blasts of passion from the press and the platform. So, the press is a most powerful forum from which leaders of different political parties preach their views. In these days all the great newspapers are run by press lords, who champion the interests of the parties to which they belong. So, the *Times*, the *Daily Mail*, and the *Daily Telegraph* are organs of the Conservative party of England. The *Daily Herald* is the mouth-piece of the Labour Party. And the *Manchester Guardian* is an old and influential organ of the Liberal Party. There are also great newspapers in India, and some of them have long traditions of independent journalism. It is a happy sign of the times that, now a days, the daily press in Calcutta and the rest of India is quite alert to the rights and liberties of the people. Let us hope that they will realize the need of independent journalism in influencing the policy of the government. So, it is time for our journalists to feel that the press is 'a boon, pulpit, platform, and forum all in one.' Indeed there is no problem of human interest—social, political, cultural, or religious—which is beyond its range.

But this is not all. Every great newspaper has a magazine page in its Sunday issue. It also publishes most interesting stories and articles on important occasions. These things give pleasure and entertainment to millions of men and women after the day's hard toil. Moreover, the newspapers publish cartoons on interesting men and things, and relieve the dullness and monotony of everyday life.

But the leaders of the press have their duties and responsibilities, and they should never forget the principles of fair journalism. It is their clear duty to make careful enquiry before publishing a single item of news in their journals. They should

avoid publishing gossips and scandals, and they should never encourage vulgarity and morbid sensationalism. There are a few newspapers that are fond of sensation-mongering. They publish articles that are as flagrantly false in fact as they are vulgar in tone. They mislead people by slogans and mere canards. These are surely the most glaring abuses of journalism. They are perhaps due to hasty and thoughtless writing, as our journalists have to think about a hundred things in an hour.

But conducted on right lines, a newspaper is a great power for good. It can give correct news and comment on it calmly, fairly, and impartially. It can acquaint its readers with the contents of books newly published. It can give wide publicity to the latest discoveries of science, and the march of events from end to end of the world. It can not only create but also control public opinion. It may open its columns for raising funds when the country is in the grip of flood, famine, and pestilence. It can glean the sayings of poets, thinkers, and philosophers for the good of our young men. In a word, it is a friend of the poor, a champion of the rights and liberties of the people, and a wise mentor to the rulers of the land. It is the press which has helped many good men to bring about great reforms in society and the state. The Chartist Movement in England, the Home Rule Agitation in Ireland, the Reform of the House of Lords were due to the eternal vigilance of the press. The Freedom Movement in India was largely influenced by the press all over the country.

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### FREEDOM OF THE PRESS

The freedom of the press is the corner-stone of the rights and liberties of a nation. Its powerful influence on public life is recognized in every country of the world. That is why Lord Macaulay has observed that 'the gallery in which the reporters sit has become a fourth estate of the realm.' Napoleon used to say that 'four hostile newspapers are more to be feared than a thousand bayonets.' This is very true, as it is the newspaper that moulds the opinions of the vast masses of men and women in every land. Moreover, it is the forum of all movements for social and political reforms, in every country and every age.

That is why the freedom of the press is most essential to the progress, prosperity, and healthy development of a nation. It is a brake on the unlimited powers of the government, and it brings to light acts of injustice and oppression, committed by the police and high officials of the state. It must be admitted, to our shame, that there are even magistrates and judges who decide

cases in a way that is shocking to public conscience. It is the press that brings these things to public notice, and comments on 'the injustice of justice.' In really independent countries, it can work wonders and turn governments out of office in no time. It was the British Press that hounded Lloyd George out of office, when he muddled on the Turkish Question. It was the press through which Ireland fought for her rights and won her independence in the fulness of time. It was the press that brought about parliamentary reform in England, induced Sir Robert Peel to repeal the Corn Laws, and humanized the Criminal Laws of England. And it was the press again that brought about the abdication of Edward the Eighth.

During two centuries of British rule in India, it was the press that voiced the feelings of the people and pleaded for their rights and liberties. It opened the eyes of all the world to the horrors of the Martial Law regime in the Punjab, the massacre of innocents in Jalianwallah Bagh, and the terrible sufferings of a people struggling for freedom. And it is the spirited appeals of eminent Indians in the columns of our journals that have inspired millions of young men to fight for the freedom of their motherland. There were black sheep in the press, here and there, who worked against the interests of their country by supporting the despotic rule of the British Government and exciting communal passions of the worst type. We have, indeed, to thank these journals for sowing seeds of discord among Hindus and Muslims and bringing about the partition of India, with all its attendant horrors and sufferings. Yet, it must be conceded that the vast majority of our journals have pleaded warmly for the freedom of our country and the rights and privileges of her people. It is the same story almost all over the world—in America, China, and Soviet Russia. Indeed, the press is a most formidable and invaluable weapon in the armoury of freedom. Thomas Jefferson, the once renowned President of the United States of America, observed very finely, "Were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers, or newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter."

We should remember that these are the words of a gallant patriot who took part in the American Revolution, and was twice elected President of the United States of America.

But we live in days of what is called 'regimented journalism.' The majority of our newspapers are controlled by financial magnates, and air their views on all the problems of the day. The editor of a journal run by one of these highbrows must reproduce 'his master's voice.' Great English journals, like *The Times* and the *Daily Mail* in England, are under the thumb of

press lords, who have earned vast wealth, and wield great influence over the State. In America the great newspapers are in the hands of powerful financial syndicates.

The freedom of the press has been guaranteed in the Indian Constitution. But even then the government try to control the press in various ways. They may withhold news which are distasteful to them, call for security from any journal, and forfeit it, if the paper prints anything which is 'prejudicial to public interests.' They may also stop sending advertisements to papers which indulge in objectionable writings. The press has entered a strong protest against some laws recently passed by the government. So, the government have appointed a press commission to go into the whole question. The report of that commission has been published. Let us see what comes of it, as we feel that an independent press can never thrive in a country which is not free from economic bondage. It can flourish only in a country where the people are really free and ruled by a true democracy. Our country is ruled by a democratic government which is largely influenced by the power of the press. That is all the reason why the press should always voice the wishes of the people, and fight for their rights and liberties.

The ideal of a free press is to act as a friend of the people and give the light of truth to those who are steeped in the darkness of ignorance. But at times, the truth is hidden under a bushel, and false news is given out and circulated in the interests of a faction or a powerful party organization. That is why we have conflicting reports of events every now and then. We have Reuter's service that gives news from the British point of view, the Tass agency that airs the views of Soviet Russia, and many other news agencies of the same kind in the East and the West. It is, to our mind, the clear duty of the press to give true news and comment on them freely, independently, and fearlessly.

It has been said that *Truth* is the first casualty of war. It cannot be denied that, in times of war, all secrets should be kept away from the enemy. Yet, there is a limit to everything, and there is no justification for turning day into night and night into day.

An independent press is the best, noblest, and most powerful friend of freedom. It is the duty of every editor to preach the equality of man, plead for right and justice, and carry the torch of freedom in the name of our beloved motherland.

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## VALUE OF AUTOBIOGRAPHIES

History is full of the glorious deeds done by great men and the lessons we learn from them. A single period of history gives us shining examples of courage, heroism, and glorious self-sacrifice made by men, whose names will live for ever. It also speaks of famous poets, artists, philosophers, and men of science. So, the world is deeply interested in the biographies of great men, who lived in the past, and are still living among us.

There are, however, different kinds of biographies. Some of them are written by blind admirers, who laud their heroes to the skies. There are others that are written with a purpose to glorify men who have been leaders of political or religious parties. There are, again, very interesting biographies which give us a complete, truthful, and vivid picture of a great life. Such is the Life of Johnson by Boswell, or the Life of Michael Madhusudan Dutt by Jogindranath Basu. Sir Jadunath Sarkar's 'Aurangzeb' and 'Sivaji' are also learned biographies, with sidelights on the history of those times.

'Autobiographies' are interesting tales of the lives of great men told by themselves. Here also the interest of the biography depends on its accuracy, liveliness, and manner of telling. It is well known that no language is finer, clearer, or more impressive than the language of the heart. When the writer gives a true, complete, and vivid picture of his own life, he attracts thousands of readers, and thrills many a heart with a mingled feeling of love, sorrow, joy, and wonder. He enables us to realize how the life of a great man was moulded by the influence of his home, his friends, and the history of the times he lived in. His biography teaches us lessons of love, piety, and endurance that we shall do well to remember and follow in life. Gibbon, the famous historian of the *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, tells the story of his life in his *Confessions*. Among the many interesting things of his personal life, we learn how he felt when, after long years of laborious work, he came to the end of his great work. He tells us that he was not quite happy when he had written out his last sheet of paper. It was a silent and moon-lit night, and the great historian felt as if he was parting from a dear friend and companion. This proves his love of history and devotion to duty. Rousseau, one of the pioneers of the French Revolution, has left a most sincere, accurate, and interesting story of his own life. He has recorded most fearlessly all the failings, weaknesses, trials, and temptations of his life. Mahatma Gandhi has also done a great thing in his autobiography. There he speaks of his early life, his love of truth, his deep faith in religion, and his

devotion to his parents. He also speaks of his early marriage, his trials, temptations, and failures. We learn from this book how he lived as a student in England, and went to South Africa to lead his fellow-countrymen in their great struggle for liberty and equal rights and privileges for one and all. For this he had to fight hard and long, give up his practice at the bar, and suffer imprisonment and humiliation. Yet he carried on, and General Smuts made terms with him. Then we are told of his life and work in India and his passionate love of truth and justice.

Surendranath Banerjee has told the story of his great life in his classical work, *A Nation in Making*. From this book we learn how he was dismissed from Civil Service for a slight mistake, and was not even permitted to practise at the bar. But he was not disheartened, and devoted his life to teaching, journalism, and the service of the country. He was one of the leaders of the freedom movement in India, and an apostle of liberty.

And we read with a thrill of delight Rabindranath Tagore's *Jiban Smriti* or 'Recollections of Early Life.' There we have a most vivid and beautiful picture of the poet's early life, his loving memories of his father, mother, and brothers, and the influence of his home and surroundings. We hear how he was often absorbed in the beauty of the trees around him, and felt that he himself had been turned into a tree. We read also that he used to look upon the world as a dreamland of beauty. We hear, moreover, of his dislike of the common type of school education, his love of reading many things, and his interest in music. Indeed, his elders used to think that he would be an excellent singer in the years to be. They had no idea, at that time, that he would rise to be the greatest poet of the world in his age. There is not a single dull line in the whole of this interesting biography, which tells of his early writings, his wide travels, and his love of Nature. Indeed, as we rise from the reading of this book, we feel that his very life was poetry.

A well-written autobiography is an asset to all the world. But unfortunately the vast majority of these books are not worth reading, as there is no sincerity about them. They are the works of men who know little of the art of writing. There is no grace, beauty, or literary flavour in these books. Moreover, a biography can only be written on the life of a great man. It is not meant for singing psalms of praise to pampered mediocrities—men who will be forgotten in a few years after their death.

But a true autobiography is a source of inspiration to all men and women. They shape the lives of great men of the future,

and hold up before all the world the highest ideals of courage, patriotism, and selfless devotion to duty. Indeed, really good autobiographies are not only wonderful works of art, but also mirrors of the lives and labours of the great and glorious men who lived in the past.

"Lives of great men all remind us  
We can make our lives sublime,  
And, departing, leave behind us  
Footprints on the sands of time."

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### OUR HERITAGE FROM INDIA OF THE PAST

We are always proud of the ancient culture and civilization of India. Modern researches have traced the history of our motherland to a period, about six thousand years before the birth of Christ. The ruins of Mohenjodaro and Harappa have proved that, even in days long, long gone by, India had great scholars and artists. And they have left behind them memorials which will live for ever in the pages of history and the hearts of men. It reads like a tale of wonder as we glance at the discoveries made at Mohenjodaro. We learn that it was an ancient city with magnificent buildings, broad streets, luxurious baths, and fine works of art and sculpture. Again, the frescoes and carvings at Ajanta, Ellora, Elephanta, and Kanarak are simply wonderful. And as we look at these glorious mementos of the past, we feel as if the artist has just finished his work. Our grateful thanks are due to the late Abanindra Nath Tagore for the revival of this school of art in modern times. Indeed, the noble work started by him is being now carried on by a band of talented artists, headed by Nanda Lal Bose. Almost all of them are pupils of Abanindranath Tagore.

India is also the home of great poets and philosophers, whose works are admired all over the world. In days long gone by, there flourished in India six great systems of Hindu Philosophy, preached by distinguished savants like Kapila, Kanada, Gautama, Jaimini, Vyasa, and Patanjali. They teach us the sacred principles of morality and religion, founded on man's deep and unbounded faith in God. They tell us that the mysterious Universe

is a revelation of the will and glory of God. And the invincible logic of Sankar is still unique and unrivalled for its depth, accuracy of reasoning, and far-reaching conclusions.

In literature, the great epics, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, are world-renowned poems, before which the Iliad and the Odyssey of Homer dwindle into insignificance. These epics have come down to us from legendary times, and reveal the genius of Valmiki and Vedavyasa. They sing, in melodious strains, of the great sages, heroes, and heroines of old. The story of Rama and Sita is known all over India. They are shining examples of loving devotion and supreme self-sacrifice at the call of duty. In the Mahabharata, the lives of Yudhisthira, Vishma, and Karna are shining examples of faith, courage, and love of truth. Equally brilliant is the heroism of Karna and Arjuna. The story of Savitri and Satyabanya is a classical example of piety, chastity, and living faith in the justice of Heaven. It was the wonderful devotion of Savitri that melted the heart of the God of Death, who restored her husband to life. These are, however, only a few among the hundreds of stories told by the sages of old. Each of them is a complete story by itself. Yet, all of them have been blended into two glorious epics, which are incomparable for their beauty and unity of design. They are also wonderfully rich in poetry and melody. These are poems that are read in every Hindu home from day to day. Mothers teach their children to be noble and heroic by them. And teachers call upon their pupils to emulate the piety, devotion, and heroic self-sacrifice of Rama, Lakshmana, and Bharata, as they recall the tales told in the Ramayana. Indeed, these great epics have deeply influenced the poetry of Kalidasa, Bhababhuti, Rabindranath Tagore, Michael Madhusudan Dutta, and Nabin Chandra Sen. What is more, they have inspired some of the finest things written by the young Muslim poets of Bengal.

Coming down to historic times, we read of the heroism of Rana Pratap Singh of Mewar, Sivaji, the founder of the Marhatta Empire, and Maharaja Ranjit Singh, the lion of the Punjab. We read also of Lakshmibai, the Ranees of Jhansi, and the memorable Rajput women who perished in the flames to escape shame, dishonour, and captivity. All the world still reads the tales of Rajput chivalry with the deepest feelings of awe, wonder, and admiration. We still recall with pride the mighty conquests of Asoka and Chandragupta, who ruled over an empire that spread from one end of India to the other and beyond. But Asoka the Great was not only a conqueror but also a wise ruler. When leading his army in Kalinga, he was shocked at the sight of the battlefield, streaming with blood, and littered with the bodies

of the dead and the dying. He recoiled from these horrors and embraced the religion of love and peace preached by Gautama Buddha. And his glorious deeds are revealed in the edicts which have been carved on stone-pillars in many parts of the country in the north, south, east, and west. He was so deeply influenced by his master that he forbade cruelty to animals all over his empire. His great ancestor, Chandragupta, ruled gloriously over a vast empire. The court of this mighty Emperor was adorned by the learned diplomat, Chanakya, a sage of vast learning and undying fame. The verses left by Chanakya are full of wise maxims and words of practical wisdom.

In ancient times, India had made great progress in Mathematics and Science. The names of Khana, Lilabati, and Varahamihira are still cherished with gratitude by men who are interested in Mathematics, Astrology, and the movements of the stars in heaven.

India was also the home of religion and learning. The vast majority of the people living in India were Hindus. She was ruled by Hindu kings for a long time. And in our times, men of different religions have come and settled in India from age to age. There are Muslims who came from Turkey, Arabia, and Afghanistan. There are Christians who have come from the West and founded missions in India. There are the Parsees of Bombay who came from Iran and Iraq and have given to India the great scholars and merchant-princes of Bombay. The Parsees have given to us the great industrial magnate Jamshedji Tata, whose Iron and Steel Works are famous all over the world. All these religions have flourished in India, side by side. The Hindu kings were followers of a religion which preached love, tolerance, and universal brotherhood. That is why we rarely hear of any religious persecutions in ancient India.

In those glorious times were the universities of Nalanda and Taxila. We read in history that these universities were adorned by great scholars of world-wide fame. Scholars from distant countries of the East and the West flocked to these universities for the light of knowledge. The great Chinese pilgrim, Hiuen Tsang, visited the University of Nalanda, and he has left a vivid account of what he saw and learnt. We hear that only, the very best students were admitted after a rigid test of their knowledge and intelligence.

It is possible to cite examples of great and glorious deeds that made India what she was. But even a broad outline of these things will fill a volume. It is for us to keep the torch of knowledge burning, and emulate the noble examples of our poets, philosophers, artists, heroes, and heroines. We should feel proud

of our bright and beautiful country with her lofty mountain ranges, smiling cornfields, thundering cataracts, mighty rivers, and roaring seas. We should feel proud of the great sages who gave unto their pupils the lessons of piety, simplicity, and devotion to learning amid scenes of idyllic beauty. We should feel inspired to think of the heroes of old who lived, fought, and died for the glory of the motherland. We should think of the great love of Shahjahan, which has been embalmed in imperishable marble in the Taj Mahal, one of the wonders of the world. And we should imbibe the love, charity, and tolerance of our great forbears. Those of us who are faint-hearted may think that it is not in our power to revive the glory of the past. But we should never listen to the voice of despair. We must work, heart and soul, to build up a culture and a civilization, that will be a happy blending of the highest and noblest achievements of the East and the West. We must combine the philosophy and idealism of the East with the energy, activity, and scientific spirit of the West. We may feel that we are advancing slowly, too slowly. But we should remember that our work is bearing fruit every moment, and leading us along the way to victory. Truly does the poet sing,

"For while the tired waves, vainly breaking,  
Seem here no painful inch to gain,  
Far back, through creeks and inlets making,  
Comes silent, flooding in, the main."

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### THE USE AND ABUSE OF TIME

'Time and tide for no man bide'. This is an old and well-known saying, which is as true today as it was ever before. Time is invaluable to each and every one of us. Life is short and art is long. The kingdom of knowledge is vast and unbounded. That is why we must make the best of the days of our little life, 'rounded by a sleep'.

One of the lessons we learn from the lives of great men is that they never waste a single moment of their time. They have an instinct to know what is the career in life meant for them, and they are guided by men who lead them in the right direction. They are born of parents who watch them with care, love, and devotion. And they read with teachers who find out

their talents and lead them in the right way. But this is not all. They work hard and long to gain knowledge. The more they learn, the more do they desire to learn. Everyday in life, they feel how much there is yet unknown. So, they read all the good books they can lay their hands on, and observe very minutely each and every object on their way. They are filled with a burning passion for knowledge. This is the ideal of life that is revealed in Tennyson's memorable poem on 'Ulysses'. Tennyson's Ulysses is very different from the Greek hero who appears in Homer's epics. Homer's Ulysses returns home after long years of wandering in the high seas, and thanks his stars when he returns home and lives happily with his wife and child. Whether on the battlefields of windy Troy or in strange lands among strange faces and other minds, he is always sick for home. But Tennyson's Ulysses is a man of a heroic mould. He is not only a great soldier but also a great explorer. He is a living embodiment of the modern passion for knowledge. That is why he is not content to live at home with an aged wife, meting and doling unequal laws unto a savage race. He knows that life is all too short for having even a glimpse of knowledge. And even in old age, his heart longs for new adventures in perilous seas unknown. That is why he leaves his sceptre and his isle to his son Telemachus, and sails, once again, with a band of devoted followers and comrades in quest of knowledge. He tells them that even old age has its honour, and he must set sail, once more, in search of worlds unknown. It may be that they will be drowned beneath the waves of the sea. Yet they must sail on and on, 'to strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.' It has been rightly observed that, in his 'Ulysses', Tennyson has given us a portrait of his own life. Even at eighty, he took new subjects and tried new ways in poetry. The cry of Ulysses is the cry of his old age.

The life of Sir Isaac Newton also teaches us the same lesson. Newton was a most active and intelligent boy in the early years of his life. He observed every little thing around him. He played with the wind and watched its movement carefully. He made a small windmill of his own. And from the dropping of an apple to the ground, he discovered the famous Law of Gravitation. Great men in all ages have the quick eye and endless curiosity of little children. But they can think deeply over all they see around them, and express them in words full of beauty and meaning. We read that Wordsworth used to walk miles and miles to see a waterfall, and suffered his dinner to cool when he heard the cuckoo cry from among the trees. We learn from the life of Rabindranath Tagore that he never wasted a single moment of his life. He used to devote long hours of the day to reading and writing. He travelled almost all over the

world, and watched the majestic beauty and grandeur of mighty oceans, lofty mountains, and thundering cataracts. He had also observed carefully the men, manners, and works of art of many countries in the course of his travels. His beautiful articles on the countries he had visited, from time to time, reveal how carefully he had seen everything around him and reflected on them. Indeed, his life was one of almost ceaseless wandering and observation, and devotion to art and beauty. But this is not all. He is a brilliant critic, novelist, dramatist, and story-teller. He is also the author of many articles on social, political, and religious problems. His philosophy attracted Dr. Radhakrishnan, who is now the Vice-President of the Indian Union. And the poet was invited by the University of Oxford to deliver the famous Hibbert lectures—lectures that thrilled an enlightened audience, who burst into long and loud cheering, when the poet concluded his speech. The cry of suffering millions touched his heart deeply and the call of the country never found him wanting. During the Martial Law regime in the Punjab, almost all India was gagged into silence. Even the stalwarts of the Congress were nowhere. Thousands of men and women were shot in Jalianwallah Bagh by order of General Dyer, and highly respected leaders of the Punjab were arrested, insulted, and transported for life after the mockery of a trial. It was Rabindranath who broke the silence and raised his voice against the Reign of Terror in the Punjab. He resigned his knighthood and addressed a spirited letter to Lord Chelmsford—a letter in which he told the Viceroy that he looked upon his knighthood as a badge of shame and dishonour. His life teaches us the value of time, every moment of which was dedicated to art, literature, and the service of the motherland. He was a poet, philosopher, and patriot.

A glimpse into his private life will show that he was a man of very active and regular habits. He retired for the night after a day of varied activities and rose early in the morning. He even told his friends that he had never missed the sunrise. He was not in the habit of sleeping in daytime, or playing at cards and other indoor games of that type. He spent his time in reading, writing, singing, and talking pleasantly with his friends, when the shades of the night closed around him. For the last twenty years of his life, he was interested in painting. And he has left behind him a series of brilliant pictures, many of which have won the admiration of artists in the East and the West. But to the vast masses of Indians, he is the prince of songs. He has left behind him about three thousand songs that are sung in every home and every assembly of men. One of his songs has been rightly adopted as the national anthem of India. He is one of those men of genius, who have made the best use of the years that were given to them here on earth.

When we speak of the right use of time, we do not mean that every minute should be spent in active work. We must give a part of our time to travelling, enjoying the beauty of Nature, and thinking deeply over the problems of life. We must not only read, but also think of what we have read. Much reading, without the power of reasoning and thinking, will make of us 'bookful blockheads ignorantly read.'

Let us now turn to our students. There is no doubt that their first and foremost duty is to study. But they have other duties as well, that should never be overlooked. They should give at least a part of their time everyday to sports, healthy recreation, and social service. They should work, in times of famine and flood, for the relief of the poor and the suffering. They should visit the homes of poor men and give them diet and medicine, when they are ill. In a word, they should look upon themselves as humble soldiers in the battle of life, who should not only work but also learn the value of discipline and organization. They should remember that 'obedience is the bond of rule', and they must learn to obey, before they become leaders of men. This is the training which is given even to the princes in many countries of the East and the West. In his student life, the son of the Emperor of Japan has to live with the poor students in hostels, eat the same food, and even dress like them. He has to live, work, and drill with common soldiers. He has to take lessons in sailing from the royal navy. The princes of England have also to read hard and prepare for the duties of their high and exalted office from their boyhood. But in our country, the sons of great landlords or native princes spend most of their time in idle amusements. Rabindranath was the son of a rich man. Yet he never wasted a moment in idle and worthless pleasures. That is why it is the duty of every student to live, work, and seek knowledge in the spirit of service. He should feel that, every moment of his life, he is doing the work of God and working for the peace, prosperity, and enlightenment of his beloved motherland.

We have dwelt fairly long on the use of time, and it is now for us to think of the abuse of time. One of the commonest instances of the abuse of time is the habit of rising late in the morning. There are many young men who keep late hours at night and then sleep for the best part of the morning. They rise late and begin their work late. So, the whole day goes wrong with them, and they cannot make much progress in their work. If they try to make up for lost time by burning their midnight candles, they injure their health. It is good for them to know that they cannot live long and do any serious work without the blessings of health. Then again, there are men who

sleep for long hours in daytime. A light midday siesta may be good for an old man, but not for a young man on the threshold of life. He must keep good health and work hard to realize his ideal in life. Similarly, a young man should take an active part in sports. He must not spend hours a day in playing at chess, cards, or dice. To read very light, frivolous, and worthless books is another abuse of time. Every young man should seek the help of his teacher for selecting good books and reading them carefully. He should also read the best periodicals and journals, and never waste his time on dirty yellow rags, and worthless things of the kind.

The hours spent in undesirable company are also glaring instances of the abuse of time. You must choose your friends, as you choose your books. A good friend brings joy and happiness to life. But summer friends lead one along the way to ruin. They set bad examples and mislead those who trust them.

Again, the time that is spent in theatres and cinemas is very often of no good to our young men. Most of the plays and pictures are frivolous and sentimental. Here also they should be guided by their parents, guardians, and teachers. On the whole, we must remember, all life long, that time once lost is gone forever.

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### LIVES OF GREAT MEN

We live in deeds, not in years. The life of a great man tells us how a noble life was nobly lived. We have read of many great heroes and heroines in history. They have won our love and admiration for their courage, resolution, and wonderful devotion to duty. If we read history carefully, we shall feel that 'not achievement but aspiration is the test of service.' But history cannot do full justice to these mighty men of old. In history we do not get a complete picture of the lives of great men. We learn little of their childhood, their early education, their life at home, and the struggles through which they rose to the heights of power and glory.

It is the lives of these men behind the limelight that enable us to take the true measure of their greatness. There is a charm, a simplicity, and a loving devotion in their family and private lives, which we often miss in history, that records the glorious march of men and events from age to age. If we read the life of

Napoleon Bonaparte, we know what a kind friend and loving son he was. He loved his mother warmly and respected her, even when the wheel of fortune turned him into the greatest hero of the world and the mighty Emperor of France.

We hear against what heavy odds he had to carry on his studies in the academy at Paris, and how he had to flee from the fury of the Corsican mob with his mother, at dead of night, across the seas. We learn again how he entered the French army as a soldier of the republic, and passed through a fiery ordeal, amid the dark cloud of suspicion and jealousy, until his greatness as a hero was acknowledged all over France and he was loaded with honours and rewards. And last of all, we wonder at his splendid victories that laid all Europe at his feet.

We read from the life of Frederick the Great that he was not only a soldier and wise ruler, but also a scholar and musician. Even when he was camping in distant battlefields, he used to play on his flute or carry on philosophical discussions with Mendelssohn, the great savant, who was one of his warmest friends.

The life of Abraham Lincoln has also a great lesson for us. We learn from it how he spent the early years of his life amid great struggles. It was in these days that he had seen the terrible condition of slaves in America. He had seen how they were taken to the markets for sale, whipped, and made to run to and fro on weary feet. It was the sight of these miseries that impelled him to take a vow that, if ever God gave him the day, he would abolish the curse of slavery with his life-blood. For this, he had to stand the opposition of his colleagues and lead the country through four years of civil war with the South. He felt and felt rightly, that the unity and dignity of the great American colonies must be maintained at any cost. He made few speeches, but he has left behind him some of the finest orations in the world. It was he who defined democracy as the 'government of the people, by the people, and for the people.' To crown all, he died the death of a martyr for his devotion to a great and noble ideal. We, in India, would have done well to profit by the lessons of his great life, and saved our motherland from shame, discord, and the horrors of bloodshed.

In the same way, we learn to love the great ideals of heroism, love of country, and glorious self-sacrifice from the lives of Rana Pratap Singh of Mewar and Lakshmibai, Ranees of Jhansi. Rana Pratap Singh carried on a ceaseless struggle with the Moghuls, as long as he lived. And Lakshmibai died fighting with the British to the last. From the tales of Rajput chivalry, we learn to honour the womanhood of India.

Indeed, the lives of great men are a mirror of the most glorious ideals of love, devotion, courage, and high sense of duty. Examples are better than precepts, and that is why we learn much more from these great lives than in the pages of books. They stir our hearts to the nobility of life and action.

Carlyle has rightly observed that great men are the finger-posts of the world. They point out to us the way in which we should live, work, and carve out our careers in life. They kindle in us a desire to emulate those noble qualities of head and heart that adorned their lives. In a sense, these men are immortal. They may pass away, but the teachings of their lives live for ever. All men of science are inspired by the example of Newton when they work in their laboratories. And all heroes are inspired with the high ideal of becoming as great as Napoleon Bonaparte, Frederick the Great, Sivaji, or Rana Pratap Singh of Mewar. Similarly, rising poets turn to the sacred memory of Shakespeare, Milton, and Rabindranath Tagore.

It has been said that great men are geniuses, who can never be emulated by the vast majority of men and women. We are told that their lives have little interest for the vast masses of mankind. But this is far from the truth.

We may not be able to rise to the heights reached by them. But we can certainly read their lives and try our best to follow them in the best of our lights. We may fail in our noble effort to do a great thing. But it will be a glorious failure, and a shining example of noble and heroic devotion to duty to those who come after us.

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### A LITTLE LEARNING IS A DANGEROUS THING

"A little learning is a dangerous thing ;  
Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian spring."

These are the words in which Pope cries down men of little learning. He means that it is better for a man not to know anything at all, than to pick up little bits of knowledge, here and there. But if we think over the question deeply, we shall find that, in itself, a little learning is not at all dangerous. But there are men who know little or nothing and give themselves the airs of learned men. It makes them proud and insolent. They abuse their powers and make wrong decisions. This is generally true of many of the so-called patriots and politicians of our day. They know very

little of history, politics, or the general principle of economies. Yet, they pose as great patriots and political thinkers. They mislead the people right and left, and are returned to the assembly or parliament on the votes of men who know as much of politics as the man in the moon. There are also teachers who are proud of their learning, although their knowledge of the subjects they teach is very poor. They defeat the very aims and ideals of knowledge.

But the man who is really learned never looks upon himself as a master of anything. Newton is one of the greatest scientists the world has ever seen. It was he who discovered the Law of Gravitation. Yet, he used to tell his friends that he was simply gathering pebbles on the seashore. This is the humility that we always find in wise men who give their light to the world, from age to age. Everyone of them realizes fully that there is no limit to knowledge. He knows that he is merely a traveller, who is yet far, far away from the vast and untravelled realm of knowledge. That is the spirit in which, in the evening of life, Ulysses sails, once again, in quest of new worlds. It is with the same feeling that Robert Browning speaks of the 'petty done' and 'the vast undone.'

In these well-known lines Pope has spoken a truth, but not the whole truth. He has not given a thought to men who have learnt little, for reasons over which they have no control. It may be that they are born poor and have not the means of receiving high education. In England and other civilized countries of the West, the vast majority of the boys and girls do not go beyond what they have learnt at high schools. They go out to the world to take training in arts, crafts, and industries. They may not become great artists, or industrialists, or engineers. Yet, they are doing very useful work for the country. But for them, industries, agriculture, engineering, and the like would have suffered heavily. Indeed, they would hardly be able to carry on. So, these men are the backbone of society, the very pulse of the machine. They are all men of little learning, but certainly they are not dangerous to the peace, progress, and prosperity of mankind.

There is yet another reason for which a little learning is more often a blessing than a curse. It makes a man more alert to the problems of life than one who has no learning at all. He will not be like the vast masses of poor and helpless men who toil in 'poverty, hunger, and dirt', to fill the pockets of the rich. The great Labour Party of England has developed into a vast and powerful organization through the efforts of men of 'a little learning', who have rendered great service to their country by their industry, earnestness, and devotion to an ideal.

A little learning is really dangerous in the case of fools who pose as learned men. It is also dangerous in a class of men who have read much, without understanding anything. These 'bookful blockheads, ignorantly read', are the greatest enemies of knowledge, culture, and progress.

It must, however, be conceded that, to an honest and diligent man, a little learning is far better than no learning. Such a man is very modest and humble. With all his failings, he knows that he has yet much to learn. It is the duty of all educated and enlightened men not to scoff at them, but to help them with books that will teach them more.

We have read of many great men who began their career in life with a little learning. But they never lost their love of reading even when they were struggling in life with sweat, toil, and tears. Charles Lamb had to leave school and work in an office very early in life. But, in the midst of his exacting duties at the desk, he used to read and write up to the late hours of the night. By his diligent studies, he acquired vast knowledge of literature and rose to be one of the most delightful writers among 'English men of Letters.' Dickens had to work and suffer for long in the earlier years of his life. He began his career as a reporter for London journals. We have read how he had to ride in coaches or walk on foot for miles across muddy roads to gather news for the journals of London. And it is this man who, in the fulness of time, became one of the greatest masters of fiction the world has ever seen. Aneurin Bevan, one of the most talented politicians of England, started his career as a coal-miner. Yet he began to read and acquire knowledge by vast industry and tireless diligence. He became, later on, a leader of Labour Unions, and one of the most talented speakers of his day. He is now acknowledged, all over the world, as a great statesman with deep and intimate knowledge of foreign politics. It is the same story with Abraham Lincoln, who was, by turns, a ship-boy, a party leader, and finally the President of the United States of America. Huxley has observed very finely, "If a little knowledge is dangerous, where is the man who has so much as to be out of danger?"

That is why we find that this famous saying of Pope does not give us the whole truth about the real nature of learning. Indeed, a little learning is never dangerous, if it makes us humble, and fills us with the desire of learning more and more with the years to be.

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## THE EAST AND THE WEST

"East is East and West is West  
And never the twain shall meet."

These are the words in which Rudyard Kipling tells all the world that there can be no real unity between the East and the West. We have no doubt that there is a world of difference between the manners and customs of men living in the East and the West. We live in a warm country, and we are, more or less, ease-loving and indolent. And that is why many of us are more fond of thinking and dreaming than toiling for the good of humanity. Even our language and ways of living have been influenced by our climate. An Englishman will shake hands with his guest *warmly*. We shall greet him with a *cold* drink. We wear loose dress, that we can put off at ease. An Englishman, however, likes tight and close-fitting garments, so that he may work hard and long. Our women are generally shy, and do not move about freely. But English women love liberty like men. Moreover, the people of the East are much more religious than those of the West. Indeed, if the people of Europe had any faith in the religion of Christ, they would never have plunged the world into the horrors of a deadly war—a war in which many beautiful cities were destroyed, and millions of innocent men, women, and children lost their lives. But India is free from this evil, only because her people—the rulers and the ruled alike—are deeply religious at heart, and long for the blessings of peace, love, and liberty.

But we should remember that human nature is essentially the same. And in spite of differences, men and women all over the world have the same feelings, emotions, and love of all that is good, great, and glorious. This is revealed in the poetry and literature of all the countries of the world. The dramas of Shakespeare breathe noble ideals of love, friendship, heroism, and glorious self-sacrifice—ideals that thrill the hearts of men from end to end of the world. The poetry of Rabindranath Tagore has given to the West invaluable gems of beauty, art, and noble idealism. And that is why Europe has honoured him with the Nobel Prize in literature. The Sermon on the Mount awakens the deepest feelings of love and charity in the hearts of men and women all over the world. Indeed, all great men think alike, in the East as well as in the West. That is why Rudyard Kipling is not right when he says that the East and the West will never meet.

Again, the progress of science has, in these days, linked the different countries of the world. We can now share the thoughts and ideals of men and women in every corner of the

globe with the help of the radio, the telephone, and airways. A man in Calcutta can now travel to London in a few days. He can speak, on the phone, with a friend in New York. And he can hear, on the radio, the voices of men and women living thousands of miles away. In this way, there has grown up a feeling of love, amity, and brotherhood among all the peoples of the world. If we look closely, we shall find that man is noble by nature. The vast majority of men and women, in every country, are kind, good, and peace-loving. It is only a handful of cruel, callous, and selfish politicians who plunge their countries into the horrors of war. They are out to win fame and glory at the cost of millions of innocent lives. Brilliant young men are taken away from their homes and forced to fight and die on distant battlefields, far from home. They die, so that their rulers may win the glory and renown of a 'great victory'. This is the lesson of all the wars that have harried and destroyed many a land, and ruined many a home from age to age.

Yet, there are great men who feel that the only remedy for these evils is to have a Union of all the nations of the world—a Union which will teach men that they are members of one single human family. In other words, these are the men who have been preaching the high ideal of the brotherhood of man and fatherhood of God. They are gaining ground everyday, and a time will surely come, when all men on earth will be united in one common bond of love and charity. That will be the Golden Age, when all distinctions of race, colour, and creed will vanish, and every man will realize that God is Love and Love is God. And with the coming of the great human family, the East and the West will meet for ever.

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### EAST OR WEST, HOME IS BEST

In days long, long gone by, man was, more or less, a wandering animal. He was a nomad, who roamed from land to land, and had no home to call his own. And there are still wild tribes that live among woods and hills, and do not remain in one place for long. The gypsies are a wandering tribe of this kind.

But in course of time, a great change came over man's ways of life. He gave up his wandering habits and settled down in one place. He was rooted to the soil, building huts to live in, tilling the ground, and growing crops for food. He still cherished his habit of hunting wild animals for dinner. But he had a home of his own, from where he used to go out, either for ploughing the

fields, or hunting wild beasts in the forests. And this great change or social revolution was brought about by the discovery of agriculture. When men were out hunting for days, the women found out that, by watering the soil and sowing seeds, they could grow vegetables and edible roots. So, man became a hewer of wood and drawer of water, and began to till his land and raise crops.

Naturally every man came to have a piece of land that was his home where he lived with his wife and children. As time passed, he became more and more attached to his home and family. He longed not only to grow corn for his food, but also to lay by something against a rainy day. He began to love his children and desired to leave something for them before he died. This was the beginning of man's love for home.

For a long time now, man's love of home has been one of the noblest qualities of his character. He is now prepared to work, suffer, and even die for the peace, safety, and honour of his home. It has been rightly observed that the Englishman's home is his castle. He will fight to the last to defend his home where live his beloved wife and children. The home has a magic spell, a charm of its own, that attracts us wherever we are. If we read the life of Milton, we shall find how he rushed home, as soon he heard of the Civil War in England. There he came and began to work for the puritanic commonwealth founded by Oliver Cromwell. He did not spare his weak eyes and wrote most of his soul-stirring sonnets and political pamphlets during these years. He defended the honour of England against the attacks of foreign nations. And the result of it all was that the poet lost his eyesight and was later placed under house-arrest. Yet, the poet did not lament for this great calamity. On the other hand, he was proud of his glorious self-sacrifice. Addressing his beloved friend and pupil, Cyriac Skinner, he wrote,

"What supports me, dost thou ask ?  
The conscience, Friend, to have lost them over-plied,  
In liberty's defence, my noble task,  
Of which all Europe rings from side to side."

And by liberty, the poet means the peace, happiness, and purity of horse life, which was threatened by Charles the First and his foreign favourites, whom he describes elsewhere as 'sons of Belial flown with insolence and wine.'

At the end of his life's labours, Shakespeare bade farewell to the stage and came to live in his home at Stratford-on-Avon where his bones are laid to rest. And, year after year, lovers of poetry and drama, from all corners of the world, come on a

pilgrimage to the home of the great dramatist, to offer their tributes of love and admiration.

Rana Pratap Singha of Mewar fought and died for the honour and freedom of his homeland. And the great heroines of Rajasthan perished in the flames to save their honour and keep inviolate the purity of their homes. Truly does an ancient poet of India sing that a man's beloved mother and motherland are sweeter than heaven. Such is man's love of home that he does not forget it in the vast snowfields among the mountains, on the angry oceans, or the sandy deserts of a far-off land. This is how Goldsmith feels when he is wandering in a foreign land, away from home :

"Where'r I roam, whatever realms to see,  
My heart untravell'd fondly turns to thee ;  
Still to my brother turns, with ceaseless pain,  
And drags at each remove a lengthening chain."

The same feeling is echoed by Payne in his 'Home, Sweet Home' :

"Mid pleasures and palaces though we may roam,  
Be it ever so humble, there's no place like home."

The noblest traits of a man's character, his finest, sweetest, and tenderest feelings are revealed at home. As we read the life of William Wordsworth in his quiet home, we are simply charmed by the poet's love for his sister—a sister who was devoted to him, all life long, and shared his joys and sorrows. We envy their quiet life amid the beauty of the hills, dales, and lakes of Grasmere. We hear how Dorothy Wordsworth used to note down every little thing in her journal—the beauty of a hill, lake, or waterfall, or the story of a wandering beggar. And the poet clothed these things in beautiful poetry with the help of his imagination and mastery of rhythm. As we read about the homelife of Charles Lamb, we are deeply moved by his heroic fortitude, lifelong sacrifice, and loving devotion to a sister who was under the shadow of a great affliction.

It has often been found that even ruthless conquerors, who have shed the blood of millions of men on battlefields, are very loving and tender to their children at home. Indeed, home has not only a cheering but also an ennobling influence on life. Our love for our brothers and sisters at home, teaches us to look upon all men and women as our brothers and sisters. Our love for our own children makes us love all children as our own. Home is sweet for many blessings, but it is the sweetest as it is the abode of love and affection. It is from home that we learn how to sacrifice our own comfort and convenience cheerfully for the health, well-being, peace, and happiness of our children. It is the

same spirit that makes us toil, all life long, for the good of those whom we love. When war breaks out, it is our love of home that makes us rush to battle and to death.

There are men who have heard the call of God to a religious life and abandoned their homes. Jesus Christ tells his disciples, "The foxes have their holes, and the birds of the air have their nests ; but the son of man hath not where to lay his head." And such was also Gautama Buddha. These men are seers and prophets, who appear after long intervals in the history of mankind. And even they were reared with the loving care of their parents and the sweet influences of home. It is the love for their dear ones at home that made them long for the love of God. Gautama Buddha left home, not because he did not love his wife and child, but because he felt that all things would perish with the years. So he went out to seek the light of truth and search for a way of escape from sorrow and death. It was their profound love of home that led these saintly men, in the fulness of time, to look upon all the world as their home.

We have among us men who have a passion for travelling. They wander from land to land in the East and West. They fly in air and sail across seas from end to end of the world. They are surely attracted by the art, music, and beautiful scenery of foreign lands. They feel a thrill of delight when they see splendid sights they have never seen before, or come in touch with men and women who have thoughts and feelings of their own. But the charm of novelty is soon lost, and the heart turns eagerly to home. That is why one feels that 'east or west, home is best.'

### IDEALS OF INDIAN WOMANHOOD

Woman is beautiful by right divine. She is the light of every home. She is also a most delightful companion of man in the journey of life. She gives him joy and solace in moments of sorrow, and enlivens the days of his life by her sweetness, simplicity, love, and devotion. That is why poets sing of her beauty, loveliness, and devotion to duty. In ancient India women were held in high regard. We read the stories of Sita and Savitri in the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, and wonder at the warmth of their love, devotion, and glorious self-sacrifice. Sita remained in exile for long years and perished in the bosom of Mother Earth for the honour of her beloved Husband. Savitri married Satyavana, knowing full well that the young man had only a year to live. It was by her love, devotion, and faith in divine justice that she melted the heart of Yama, the God of Death, and regained her husband. Indeed, this is the ideal of woman-

hood cherished in every home in India. Our girls hear the stories of Rama and Sita, and Savitri and Satyavana from their infancy. They read them in the Ramayana and the Mahabharata when they are a little older, and cherish them in memory, all life long.

In India, chastity has always been regarded as the brightest jewel of a woman's life and character. It is, to them, purer than the sacred waters of the Ganges, and brighter than the evening star that rises in the dewy east.

This is the ideal that thrilled the hearts of the women who have shed the light of their soul on the pages of our nation's history. When we read the ancient history of Rajasthan, we realize why Padmini the Beautiful perished in the flames to save her chastity and the honour of Rajasthan. Panna the Emerald sacrificed her own child to save Uday Singha, the heir to the throne of Chitor. Death had no terror for these heroic women. They were attracted by the highest ideals of Indian womanhood in flinging away the joys of life, and plunging into flames to perish in a blaze of glory. 'Better death than disgrace' was their ideal in life.

There have also been many heroines in the long history of India. We have read how Lakshmi Bai, the Rani of Jhansi, died fighting with the British to the last. She sprang on her horse, when she heard that British soldiers were in sight. She rushed out and fell fighting to the last. In our own day, we have seen a heroine who led the Rani of Jhansi regiment of the Indian National Army.

Women of ancient India were highly cultured and talented. Among them were Gargee, Maitreyee, Lilabati, and Khana, who have shed the light of their genius on our culture and civilization. There have also been among them pious devotees like Mirabai. Even to this day, the *bhajans* or devotional songs of Mirabai, are sung in every home. The pomp, splendour, and pleasures of the royal palaces had no charm for her. She left her home and wandered from land to land, singing the glory of the Lord. Her glorious life is a fountain of joy and inspiration to the women of India. Indeed, there is hardly any woman in our country who does not love her religion. Everyday of her life, she will offer her prayers to God, before she begins the duties of the household. Among the pilgrims that flock to the temples of our gods and goddesses, women far outnumber men. They are naturally weak and tender. Yet, year after year, hundreds and thousands of our women travel on foot to the holy temples of Badrinarayan and Kedarnath amid the snowfields of the Himalayas. They brave the perils of rain, storm, and icefalls cheerfully, out of their burning love of religion. That is a thing which is simply unique and wonderful, and can be seen only in the women of India.

There was, however, a change in our social customs when India passed under Muslim rule. In those days, the manners and customs of our Muslim rulers influenced Hindu society. It was due to their influence that the purdah system came into vogue. Our women lost the freedom they enjoyed in ancient India. They were confined within the four walls of their homes, all day long, and lost all contact with the world outside. Their education suffered, and their outlook was darkened. Every woman was made to feel that she should love only her husband and children. She had no duty either to the society she lived in, or to the land of her birth. She worked, day and night, for the comfort and happiness of her husband and children. She toiled and suffered for them, and gave away her all for their sake. She never thought of sleep and rest, and spoilt her health. Indeed, the life of a Hindu woman is one of suffering and sacrifice for her dear ones. But this intense devotion to the family made her rather selfish and narrow-minded in her dealings with the rest of the world. Her education was neglected, and she was denied the light of knowledge. This was the state of our society only a quarter of a century ago.

But a great change has come upon it in our times. The government and the people of India have realized the need of women's education. A large number of schools and colleges, intended only for women, have been started all over the country. And it is refreshing to feel that the number of school and college-going girls is rising everyday. The State has resolved to give free and compulsory primary education to all our boys and girls so that, in a few years, not a single girl may go without education in some form or other. The purdah has been lifted for ever, and our girls have seen the light of the world around them. They are coming into contact with their brothers and sisters, all over the land, and on the radio they can hear the voices of their sisters across the seas. They are also taking a keen interest in the affairs of their country, and demanding equal rights and privileges with men. But the influence of western culture has inclined at least some of them to the fashions and fancies of foreign lands. Yet, we are sure that the time is not far off when they will settle down to the new order of things, and blend in themselves the best elements of the East and the West. That is why, today, the ideal of Indian womanhood is not only purity and chastity, but also freedom and equality, and a desire to join with men in working for the good of the motherland. The ideal woman of today is an educated, enlightened, and delightful companion of man in the battle of life. She is a woman who blends in herself the love, devotion, and loyalty of Sita and Savitri, the heroism of Lakshmibai, the learning of Khana and Lilabati, and the glorious self-sacrifice of her sisters in ancient Rajasthan.

## RIGHTEOUSNESS EXALTEETH A NATION

These are the words in which the Psalmist calls upon man to shed all evils and walk in the ways of the Lord. "The eyes of the Lord," he says, "are upon the righteous, and His ears are open unto their cry." It is the Lord who saves them from all troubles. This is the faith in which man has lived from age to age, through all his trials, temptations, sorrows, and sufferings. But the Devil that tempted Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden is still among us. He stalks the world from end to end, and holds up before us alluring visions of wealth, power, kingdoms, and empires. That is why the world is afflicted, from time to time, with deadly wars with all their attendant evils. We forget all the teachings of our sages and all the noble ideals of life amid the din of war. We are carried away by the love of power and the greed of gold. Our Christians read the Bible everyday, and kneel down before the Lord for His blessings. But they do not remember that Christ preached a religion of love, charity, repentance, and forgiveness, all through his life. In his 'Sermon on the Mount', he told the people who came to hear him, "Blessed are the peacemakers; for they shall be called the children of God." He called upon man to love his neighbour as he loves himself, and to forgive an enemy, not only once or twice but seventy times seven. That is why when he was nailed to the cross to die, he cried out, "Lord ! forgive them, for they know not what they are doing." Many of his apostles died for the sake of truth and love of God. They died out of their burning faith in

"Truth, that's brighter than gem,  
Trust, that's purer than pearl,—  
Brightest truth, purest trust in the universe."

But man's love of truth and his faith in justice and righteousness are fading away in these days of selfish strife and struggle. We have passed through the fiery ordeal of a World War, in which Christians slaughtered millions of Christian men, women, and children by fire, sword, air-raids, and atom bombs. When the Americans destroyed Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Mr. Winston Churchill warmly applauded their action in the British Parliament. The American press sang psalms of praise to President Truman. So the war ended and brought peace to the world. But it was the peace of the grave, that stifled the patriotic feelings of a great nation and plunged it into poverty, disgrace, and disaster. Many historic cities in France, Germany, and Russia have been turned into a shambles. Nearer home, Mandalay, the ancient capital of Burma, is now a mass of ruins. What is worse, the world is still in the throes of a number of wars, warm or cold, in the East and the West. And our beloved friends of America—the home of George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, and Emerson—are pulling the strings from

behind. They carried on a long and lingering war in Korea, and made alliances with states that are ever willing to sell their birthright for a poor mess of pottage. In a word, the leaders of the so-called great nations of the world have sold their souls to the Devil. It was Emerson who once wrote, "Our greatest refutations of the nineteenth century will be cited afterwards as instances of our barbarism." If he had been living today, he would have been simply stunned at the barbarities of his countrymen in the battlefields of the East. Hatred begets hatred, and distrust begets distrust. That is why the last World War was followed by the trial and hanging of German and Japanese generals. The latest example of judicial murder is the trial and execution of the Rosenbergs after four years of detention in prison, and on evidence on which a civilized nation would not hang a cat. And this is the view which has been expressed by Bertrand Russell in one of his latest pronouncements. And surely these are things that will make God and his angels weep, and make Jesus Christ turn in his grave. Yet, these are only a few of the many examples in history, which tell us that civilization is crumbling and whole nations have been demoralized, vulgarized, and brutalized by their love of conquest. These men have clean forgotten that 'righteousness exalteth a nation'. They think that the pride of conquest and the pomp of power exalt a nation, more than anything else on earth. "They palter with eternal God for self."

But they should remember that the hands of justice move slowly, but move sure. In their pride of power, Hitler and Mussolini could never dream that they would lose all that they had wrested by force, and that their empires would vanish before their eyes and they would die in disgrace. The Czars of Russia could never think of the revolution that was coming—a revolution that would sweep away all the old institutions of the country and work wonders in the fulness of time. Louis XIV of France was the ruler of a vast empire. It was he who once said, "I am the State." And, in the reign of Louis XVI, broke out the great French Revolution, with its visions of liberty, equality, and fraternity. But the Revolution which was inspired by the noblest ideals was tarnished with the blood of innocents. The spirit of suspicion, distrust, and revenge was in the air, and France marched across a blood-stained road from horror to horror. Louis XVI and his Queen were led to the guillotine after the mockery of a trial. The result was that the Revolution failed to achieve its ideal, and France came under the iron rule of Napoleon. It was not until 1870 that she became a republic. And once again, for her lust of revenge, France is about to lose her colonies in the East.

It is the same tale with England. There was a time when England was the home of liberty. She was the friend of all the

afflicted nations of the world and stood by them gallantly, when they were struggling for freedom. One of her great poets, Lord Byron, died in the swamps of Missolonghi, in organizing the people of Greece and encouraging them to fight for their freedom. It was England that sheltered Garibaldi and Mazzini, when Italy was fighting for her liberty. It was she who welcomed Kossuth when Hungary was struggling for light and liberty. That is why, by the grace of God, this small island rose to be the greatest naval power in the world and ruled over a vast empire for centuries. Every Indian loves the memory of Queen Victoria who sent a message of love and goodwill to the people of India, after the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857. She brought peace and order in the country, and gave to her people the blessings of British justice. Great and distinguished judges have come to this country, from time to time, and done justice, not only between man and man, but also between the rulers and the ruled. The High Court of Calcutta was looked upon by the people of Bengal as the palladium of justice, and we still cherish with gratitude the memories of Sir Burnes Peacock and Sir Lawrence Jenkins. It was these men who made the people of India loyal to the core.

But with the years, the rulers of India allied themselves with the commercial magnates of the country. They tried to stifle the love of liberty among the people of the country by making friends with feudal princes, rabid communalists, greedy landlords, and cold-blooded villains who were traitors to the land of their birth. Even British justice lost its prestige. England sent judges who were influenced by the rulers of the land, and tried to suppress the rights and liberties of the people. They became, more or less, creatures of the government, and cast the principles of righteousness to the winds. It was they who shook our people's faith in British justice, and fomented a spirit of revolt among them. There were fanatical outbursts of revenge and relentless repression. The leaders of our country were sent to prison, time after time. Subhas Chandra Bose had to flee the country to carry on the fight for freedom from abroad. And it must be said to his honour and glory that he organized the Indian National Army and hoisted the banner of freedom in Indian territory. He failed but his failure is more glorious than success. And God rewarded his great striving, by giving the light of freedom to his motherland. It was really Subhas Chandra who kindled in his countrymen that spirit of divine discontent, which spread to the army, the navy, and the air forces. And England realized, at long last, that it was no longer safe or profitable to rule over a land seething with discontent. The British left India, but gave a parting kick before they left. They split the country into two hostile camps. They created Pakistan, and India waded through a sea of blood to her freedom. The times

are changed and even the colonial possessions of the British elsewhere are about to crumble away. It is, to our mind, God's punishment for their sins—the sins which led them to forget that 'righteousness exalteth a nation'. This is also the lesson we learn from the histories of Rome, Greece, Egypt, Babylon, and Assyria. The Roman Empire was overrun by the Huns, the Goths, and the Vandals, for the sins of its people. The Romans forgot their old ideals of truth, righteousness, and heroism. The leaders of Rome began to fight among themselves for power and possessions. This was how the Roman Republic fell, and Rome came under the rule of Emperors. And we know how the Emperors lived in pomp and luxury like the sons of Belial flown with insolence and wine. They became so immoral, selfish, and sensual that they lost their heroic spirit, and were unable to defend themselves against the barbarians of the North. Greece fell for want of unity and scramble for power among rival states. And it is for their sins that Egypt, Babylon, and Assyria lost their honour, glory, and freedom. They lost the ideals of truth, justice, and righteousness, and that is why God afflicted them and brought about their ruin.

Indeed, such is the condition of the world today that vast masses of men and women, all over the earth have lost faith in the sacred principles of love and charity. And in a world, filled with hatred and jealousy, was heard the voice of Mahatma Gandhi. It was he and he alone who preached the ideals of peace, love, and forgiveness, during the crowded years of his life. It was this which led him, in the bitter, biting cold of winter, to wander about like a lonely pilgrim in the villages of East Bengal. And it was for this that he was reviled by many of his countrymen, and died at the hands of a fanatic. Indeed, it was rightly said of him that he was the only Christian after Christ.

That is why it is the sacred duty of each and everyone of us to carry his message of love and liberty, from door to door and land to land. We may have to suffer, and even die, in the midst of our noble work. It may be that we shall lose our all—family, fortunes, and home. Yet, we must 'act in the right for right is right'. We must lift the trumpet of God from the dust, and kindle a new spirit of love, liberty, suffering, and self-sacrifice among our brothers and sisters all over the land. It is then and then alone that we shall rise to be a great nation, whose glory will shine in the pages of history, and inspire men and women from end to end of the world. Let us, therefore, lift up our hearts and sing, with the poet,

"The trumpet lies in the dust,  
Come, fighters, carrying your flags,  
And singers with your war-song !  
Come, pilgrims on the march,  
Hurrying on your journey !  
The trumpet lies in the dust, waiting for us."

## COURTESY IS THE GRACE OF LIFE

Our life on earth is full of sorrows and sufferings. Yet, there are little things, here and there, that give joy and sweetness to life. As we return home after the day's toil, we are greeted by little boys and girls who are always so innocent, happy, and cheerful. But, out of home, there are many kind friends, whose love, sympathy, and words of welcome give zest to life. They are always kind and courteous to us. They receive us warmly, and make kind enquiries about our health, our family, and even about the flowers and plants growing in our little gardens. This is the inborn courtesy of good men, who are loved and respected by all. They are men who have been reared in happy homes, where they have never heard an unkind word. They are not only decently educated, but also refined and graceful in their manners. They know that a kind word costs nothing, and earns the good wishes of thousands of men and women.

Yet, there are men who are almost always rough and blunt in their manners. Their words and deeds reflect the meanness and cruelty of their nature. They care only for their own comfort and luxury, and spend their lives in hoarding what they have earned. They do not share the joys and sorrows of their fellow-men. Such men darken the homes they live in, and poison the minds of those who come into contact with them. They are cold and awkward in company, and no one likes them. Among them are Christians who forget the teachings of the Holy Bible, "Love thy neighbour as thou love thyself." There is no grace or charm in their lives. They are, in the words of Rabindranath, strangers on earth. They do not realize that all men are brothers in the kingdom of God, who is the Ruler of heaven and earth, and the kind Father of us all.

There are, again, some men who are very good and kind at heart. Yet, they are rather curt and blunt in their outward behaviour. They are so busy with their work that they do not like to spare a moment for a hearty talk with a friend or a neighbour. We find men like these among mathematicians, scientists, physicians, and high officials who are deeply absorbed in the work of administration. They think that it is simply waste of time to talk for a while with a friend or a visitor, hear a song, or attend a social gathering. We must say that, in spite of all their talents and learning, these gentlemen are wanting in one of the most charming qualities of human character—the quality of being kind and pleasant to one and all. To our mind, it is a misfortune to be wanting in these human qualities that cost nothing and give light, joy, and sweetness to life. Great men are all the greater when they have the saving grace of human kindness and courtesy. All the world knows that Rabindranath

Tagore was one of the busiest men of his day. He was always doing something or other—reading, writing, speaking, painting, or singing. He was deeply interested not only in poetry and art, but also in religion, philosophy, and politics. Yet, he never sent away anyone who came to see him. For every man, high or low, he had a kind word. He could find time, in the midst of all his work, to talk with his friends, address meetings, and receive any number of distinguished guests and visitors from all parts of the world. But he never wasted his valuable time by attending dinners at Government House, or seeking interviews with Viceroys and Governors. Indeed, his closest and most intimate friends came from the enlightened middle class. He loved all children warmly and even played with them. He never forgot, for a moment, the words of Christ, "Let the children come unto me." Indeed, many great men have been found to be kind and loving to children. Alfred Lord Tennyson, Robert Browning, William Ewart Gladstone, and even Bernard Shaw were fond of children. The kindness and courtesy of these men touched the hearts of millions, who were able to feel how noble, large-hearted, and pleasant these great men were. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru flares up, every now and then, when he rises to make public speeches. Yet, in private life, he is always kind and cordial. In the midst of heavy work, he will stop to talk pleasantly with children and answer all their questions. Mahatma Gandhi was also fond of children and polite to a fault. He had a stern sense of duty and acted in the light of his conscience against all the world. Yet, he never used a rude word in his life, and he was pleasant and cheerful to all. Many eminent Englishmen called on him now and then. He had to tell them things they did not like. Yet, he reasoned with them so politely and he was so pleasant in his manners that none of them ever thought or spoke ill of him. Mr. Winston Churchill once described the Mahatma as a half-naked, seditious fakir. Sometime after, he met the Mahatma during the Round Table Conference in England. There they greeted each other cordially, and shook hands warmly like good friends. Neither the Mahatma nor Mr. Churchill lost anything by his courtesy.

On the other hand, these little things give grace and charm to life. It is said of Dr. Johnson that he burst into tears when George the Third spoke a kind word to him. History tells us that George the Third was a most foolish, bigoted, and worthless king. It was due to his bigotry and intolerance that England lost the American colonies. Yet, he was a very good and kind-hearted man in private life. He used to go out for a walk every morning, visit the homes of poor farmers, talk with their little children, and make them little presents now and then. His kind words, little gifts and his pure and simple life, made him the idol of the vast

masses of men and women in England. They loved and admired him, and forgave all his failings and weaknesses. Indeed, a kind word is worth its weight in gold.

Aristotle says that man is a political animal. If we go a step farther, we shall find that man is a social animal. He cannot live alone. Robinson Crusoe was sick of his lonely life, after some time. Alexander Selkirk cried out, in the agony of his soul,

"Oh Solitude ! where are the charms  
That sages have seen in thy face ?"

Wherever he is, man longs to see a familiar face, hear a friendly voice, and feel the warm touch of one he loves. He would never have been happy in life, if he had not brothers, sisters, friends, and relations who feel for him and love him. And the link that binds him with his fellow-men is courtesy. Who will ever care to mix with us if we are not kind and courteous ?

Socrates was the wisest man of his age. He died for the sake of truth. Yet, there is a little story about the life of this man, for which we love him all the more. It makes his life sweeter, brighter, and nobler. We are told that the wife of Socrates was a shrew. She would always try to pick a quarrel with her husband, and shout at the top of her voice. But Socrates always kept quiet, while she fretted and fumed. One day she was so furious that she poured a tumbler of cold water on the head of Socrates. But the great sage only smiled and said, "So much thunder must needs a shower."

This single incident is enough to make us feel that 'courtesy is the grace of life.'

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### VARIETY IS THE MOTHER OF ENJOYMENT

There is a well-known saying that 'variety is the spice of life'. It means that there is no charm in a life which has never known a change. It is very much like a dish that is not flavoured or seasoned with spice. If we live in the same place all the days of the year, we shall feel sick of it after some time. We shall long to go out for a change to a healthy and beautiful place, or a holy city like Banaras or Puri. We shall heave a sigh of relief and feel a thrill of delight when we go to the seaside at Puri, and have a dip in the Bay of Bengal. We shall also see something grand and sublime, when we visit the temple of Jagannath, or the architectural beauty of the temples at Bhubaneswar and Kanarak. And we shall feel so happy that we may not like to return to the crowded city of Calcutta to resume our work amid a cloud of dust and smoke. Indeed, this is the feeling that haunts every

dweller in a city, when he takes a day off and makes a trip to the countryside. It is the same thought that has inspired Keats's beautiful sonnet, 'To One Who Has Been Long in City Pent'. There he describes the pleasures of a man, dwelling in a city, who spends a day in the countryside to enjoy the beauty and loveliness of Nature. He looks at the deep blue sky, smiling in cheerful sunshine, and offers a thankful prayer to God, the Giver of all delights. There he lies down on a bed of tender green, and reads a tale of love and longing. In the evening he is charmed with the sweetly sad song of the nightingale, as he returns to his home in the city. And he regrets that such a bright and lovely day has passed away so soon.

If we read the lives of the great poets of the world, we shall find that they were very fond of travelling. We are told that Homer wandered from end to end of Greece, singing his great epics to the tune of his harp. Goldsmith travelled in many countries of Europe, earning bread and shelter by playing on his flute. Milton, Wordsworth, Shelley, Byron, and Keats travelled from land to land, enjoying the beauty of the sky, the sea, the hills, the streams, and the glorious works of art, wherever they went. Rabindranath Tagore travelled, far and wide, in Asia, Europe, and America. Even when he was at home, he spent many months of the year in travelling to the beautiful hill-stations and sea-resorts of India. He was also keenly interested in the historic cities of India, rich with the memorials of ancient art and culture. He had seen much of the beautiful rock-carvings of Ajanta, Ellora, Elephanta, and the like. His splendid poem on Tajmahal recalls the beauty, grandeur, and romance of this wonder of the world. And he had seen, as no one ever before had seen, the beauty of the grand rivers, smiling cornfields, and the lovely and green woodlands of Bengal. He was a poet, first and foremost. But he was also a dramatist, a story-teller, a novelist, and a wonderful critic of art and literature. And during the last twenty-five years of his life he used to devote a few hours of the day to the art of painting. He has also written many thoughtful articles on the political and social problems of the country. At Oxford he delivered the famous Hibbert lectures on Philosophy to the delight, wonder, and admiration of an enlightened audience. As a musician he had few equals in India and, as a composer of songs, he is unrivalled in all the world. During the crowded years of his life, he composed three thousand songs—songs that are sung in every home from end to end of India. He was a man of many sorrows in private life. Yet, it was his deep and lively interest in the varied problems of life that enabled him to live and work for eighty years. We admire and enjoy his writings so much, for the range and variety of his studies and interests.

Life is a rainbow of many colours. One single man has to do

his duties in many spheres. He is a father, a son, a brother, and a friend. He must love and take care of his father, mother, wife, and children. And if he is a man worth his name, he will love his neighbours as he loves himself. He will have to work for his bread. But he has also his duty to his home, to the society he lives in, and to his country. He will always offer his grateful prayers to God, for His blessings to mankind. It is the same feeling which thrills the heart of Wordsworth when he sings of 'The Skylark'. As he thinks of this bird that sings in the sky all day long and returns to its nest in the evening, he exclaims :

"Type of the wise who soar, but never roam ;  
True to the kindred points of Heaven and Home."

It is due to this love of variety that all men have their tastes and diversions. This is seen not only in great men, but also among the common people. Those who have no interest beside the sphere of their work are an exception. Rabindranath Tagore was fond of reading, singing, painting, and travelling by sea and land. Wordsworth liked to live beside the hills and lakes of Grasmere, enjoying the beauty and charm of Nature among the woodlands, and listening to the songs of the birds. Byron was fond of wandering across the seas, and swimming on the crests of their rolling waves. Surendranath Banerjee loved riding, and Lord Sinha used to spend an hour or two of his busy time every-day, in playing at bridge with his friends. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru is fond of playing with children. Even the common people have their sports, pastimes, and diversions. The Santhals like to dance, sing, and play on the flute after the day's hard labour. They are excellent musicians, though this is little known to most of us. Among them is 'many a flower that is born to blush unseen'. Fairs, country dances, *jatra* performances, and folk songs attract vast masses of people in our country. Sometimes they will leave their work in the fields to enjoy these things.

Love of variety is in the very blood of men and women. This is seen in the many-coloured sarees worn by the ladies, the new coats and frocks worn by children, sports and entertainments of various kinds, and man's desire of changing one calling for another.

Our life on earth has its moments of pleasure and hours of sorrows and sufferings. Truly does the poet sing, "Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought." But we should remember that, but for this blending of joy and sorrow, life would not have been worth living. Indeed, we should never have been able to enjoy life fully, if we had no taste of sorrow. We could never enjoy light, if we had no idea of darkness. Really, it is this hope of seeing better times, that keeps us going on and doing our duties on earth. We feel with the poet, "If winter comes, can spring be far behind ?"

## UNEASY LIES THE HEAD THAT WEARS A CROWN

These are the words in which a sleepless king unburdens his soul in the deep silence of midnight. It is Shakespeare's Henry the Fourth who has ascended the throne of England after many years of trials and sufferings and the throes of a long and deadly war. He has won the throne and wears the royal crown on his head. But he has no peace of mind. He has been worn out with cares and worries and robbed of his sleep. Indeed, we read in history how, from age to age, empires have risen and fallen, and kings and conquerors have come and gone. But none of them, for all we know, have ever enjoyed real happiness or the incomparable blessings of peace.

There were great kings in the past who became crazy with the toil and trouble of ruling the state, and lived the last years of their lives in misery. The Ramayana and the Mahabharata tell us of long-drawn wars between Ramchandra and Ravana, the demon-king, and the Kauravas and the Pandavas at Kurukshetra. These are tales full of sorrows, sufferings, painful exiles, and many other heart-rending events that disturbed the lives of the great kings who ruled at Ajodhya and Hastinapur. We read in the Bible that King Saul lost the harmony of his soul amid the cares of the state and the troubles that beset him on all sides, and David sang to him to soothe his troubled mind. He charmed away the king's dark melancholy with the sweet melodies of his harp, reminding him of the joys of living and the greatness of royal destiny.

History tells us that Napoleon Bonaparte was found awake at any hour of the night. His ministers and generals had orders to see him at any time, in the day or night, if there was any urgent business to attend to. It is the same tale with George the Third. He was a king who had, for half a century, ruled England with an iron hand, and exerted all his powers and strength to crush the revolted American colonies. But ten years before his death, he lost the light of reason and became blind, helpless, miserable, and forlorn. This is how Thackeray describes the last days of his life :

"Driven off his throne ; buffeted by rude hands ; with his children in revolt ; the darling of his old age killed before him untimely, our Lear hangs over her breathless lips and cries, 'Cordelia, Cordelia, stay a little !'

It is said of Kaiser Wilhelm the Second that he was found awake at all hours of the night. We need not be surprised at all these. They were men who ruled over vast empires, made wars, led armies to the battlefields, overthrew kings and kingdoms, and set up new ones in their places. That is why they had to think of many problems and, most of all, of the honour, safety, and glory

of their empires. We read in the history of India how Akbar was watching the movements of the Rajput army in the still darkness of the night, and killed Jaimal by a shot from his gun.

We also read of Lakshmi Bai, Ranees of Jhansi, who kept night-long vigils for many days, when the British army besieged her fort. Indeed, it is not given to kings and queens to sleep peacefully at night. In Shakespeare's *Julius Cæsar*, Brutus envies the deep sleep enjoyed by his page, when he is walking restlessly in his tent on the eve of the battle of Philippi.

The times are now changed, and most of our rulers do not wear crowns on their heads. But they are uncrowned kings and have the duties and responsibilities of the crown. And what is more, they must look upon themselves as servants of the people. The President of the United States of America does not wear a crown or sit on a throne. But he has all the powers of a king—powers which have been conferred on him by the people. Yet, unlike the kings of yore, he holds his office at the pleasure of the people, and may be removed by them in a grave crisis. He has to guide the internal affairs and foreign policy of the states. This brings his country, at times, into conflict with other nations. The latest example is America's wilful dabbling in the affairs of Korea and other Asian countries. The war in Korea lingered for years and cost many thousands of American lives. Similarly, America is now deeply agitated over the relations between Formosa and Red China. America is mightily afraid of Russia and communist ideology. That is why the President of the United States of America has become restless, and he is trying frantically to form power-blocs against Russia. We need not say whether his policy is right or wrong. It shows that he has no peace of mind, and he is very uneasy about the affairs of the world around him.

The same thing may be said of our Prime Minister, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, on whom rests primarily the duty of protecting India against foreign invasion, the organization of her army, navy, and the air-forces, and the industrialization of the country from end to end. With the acumen and vision of a scientist, he has launched the great river valley projects and elaborate plans for the prevention of flood and famine. We have great doubts as to whether he ever enjoys sound sleep at night. He has many problems on his hands—land reforms, removal of social abuses, advancement of learning, and the development of trade, agriculture, and industries. All the year round, he has to fly from one end of India to another, and also to foreign countries on diplomatic missions. He has to bear the abuses and insults of people who do not like his policy. And some time ago, an attack was made on his life. He does not, of course, care for danger or death, but certainly such a thing must set him thinking.

Mahatma Gandhi passed all his life through fiery ordeals, in South Africa and then in India. He had spent many years of his life in prison. The problem of social inequality and Hindu-Muslim unity worried him all life long. And at last he laid down his life at the altar of that great ideal.

It is possible to multiply instances. But what we have said proves, as clearly as ever, that great kings, great statesmen, and great patriots can never lie in peace.

To feel and suffer for the good of humanity and the glory of the motherland is the penalty of those who have been leaders and rulers of men from age to age.

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### SCIENCE AND RELIGION

We are often told that science is an enemy of religion. Science deals with the things we see around us everyday, but religion tells us of things unknown and unseen. The man of science depends on reason in carrying on his work. He must have the power of seeing things fully and clearly. Then he must analyse what he has seen, combine all these things, and try to find out the principles or laws behind them. But religion is based on intuition, the power of feeling the glory of God in our heart of hearts. This is the feeling that moves Wordsworth when he looks at the beauty of the world about him and feels that 'there hath passed away a glory from the earth'. There is hardly any other English poet who has seen, loved, and enjoyed the beauty of Nature so deeply. Yet, he feels the presence of God behind it all.

But he has been surely carried away by his impulse when he says,

"One impulse from a vernal wood  
May teach us more of man,  
Of moral evil and of good,  
Than all the sages can."

He tells us that we have learnt enough of Science and Art, and it is time for us to close the barren leaves of our books, and come out in the open to enjoy the beauty and loveliness of Nature.

He is, however, at one with the scientist when he says that Nature is our best teacher. To the scientist also Nature is the fountain of knowledge. He works, all life long, to watch the movement and order of the sun, the moon, and the stars. He

looks at the grandeur of mountains, thundering waterfalls, and vast snow-fields. He watches the beauty and majesty of the seas, rivers, and streams. His heart leaps up with delight when he sees the rainbow in the sky, and he is lulled to sleep when the rain sings its lullaby. And his vision of glory is disturbed, from time to time, by storms, tempests, earthquakes, and angry oceans. The man of the world looks upon all these things as gifts of God, or the punishment inflicted by Him for our sins. But the scientist tries to find out the causes of all these things. He tries to probe into the mysteries of Nature and wrest her secrets. After centuries of patient toil and laborious research, science has been able to discover the causes of many of the wonders and terrors of Nature. And it is the labours of men of science that have enabled us to devise ways and means by which we may be forewarned of coming dangers, or at least protect ourselves as best as we can. It is science that has taught us how to avert floods, pump out water from sodden cornfields, irrigate lands in times of drought, and so on. It has worked wonders with electric power, and given us not only railways, steamships, and telegraphs, but also the radio, by which we can keep in contact with the rest of the world. There are now-a-days powerful aeroplanes that may carry us from one end of the world to the other in a few days. Indeed, distance has been almost wiped out, and we feel that the earth is shrinking.

But this is not all. Science has invented many wonder medicines, which are curing deadly diseases that were once given up as incurable.

For all these things we should be grateful to the men of science. We should realize that, in doing good to us, science is really doing the work of God. Our ancient Indian physicians used to take the name of God, before they applied a medicine. They believed that man cannot do anything against the will of God. It is He who has given us the power with which we are working for the good of mankind. We should remember that it is no use taking the name of God, so long as we do not work for the peace, happiness, and prosperity of our brothers and sisters all over the world. That is why Christ told his followers, "Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in Heaven." There is no doubt that science has invented many agents of destruction, like the atom bomb or the poison gas. It has placed, in the hands of the Americans, the hydrogen bomb, which threatens the very existence of the world we live in. Many beautiful cities have been ruined, and hundreds and thousands of men, women, and children have been killed by these deadly things. But we should not lay the blame for all these

terrible happenings at the door of science. It is not the men of science, but the wily politicians and rulers of states who are responsible for this deadly work. It is they who have compelled, at the point of the bullet, their men of science to give the fruits of their work to the Devil.

There is, indeed, no hostility between religion and science. There are great men of science who believe in the presence of an all-powerful and unseen power behind the workings of Nature. They know that there is a limit to knowledge, and there are still many things that we do not know. Tennyson's Ulysses is right when he says,

"Yet all experience is an arch  
Wherethro' gleams that untrodden world,  
Whose margin fades for ever and for ever  
As we move."

This is the reason why man looks upon religion as his only solace, when he fails to solve the doubts and misgivings that crowd his mind. In these solemn moments, he finds consolation in prayer which is, as it were, the golden link between man and God. He realizes that there is no conflict between science and religion, and God reveals himself in and through Nature.

This is the feeling that inspires Wordsworth when he sings,

"Flowers laugh before thee in their beds,  
And fragrance in thy footing treads ;  
Thou dost preserve the stars from wrong ;  
And the most ancient heavens, through thee, are  
fresh and strong."

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#### WE LIVE IN DEEDS, NOT IN YEARS

"Life is real ! Life is earnest !  
And the grave is not its goal."

These are the noble words in which a great poet calls upon us to live and work for the good of mankind. It is a stirring call to duty and a warning against man's vain longing for ease and indolence. If we look at the world around us, we shall find many men and women who love to live in peace and plenty, free from the toils and troubles of life. They care only for their health,

wealth, and comfort, and not for the light of knowledge or the joy of work.

They feel, like Prospero,

"We are such staff

As dreams are made on, and our little life  
Is rounded with a sleep."

They think that man's life is like a flower that blooms only for a while, and then fades away for ever.

But there is a thrill, a joy in life, which they have neither the heart nor the power to feel. Long ago, Carlyle preached the gospel of work in his *Past and Present*. There he tells us, "Blessed is he who has found his work; let him ask no other blessedness." And this is the feeling which inspired Browning when he sang.

"How good is man's life, the mere living !

### **how fit to employ**

All the heart and the soul and the senses for ever in joy."

These great poets and thinkers look upon life as the most precious gift of God to man. They feel that it is the sacred duty of each and every man to work for the glory of God by love, repentance, suffering, and sacrifice. He should remember that he is the temple of the Living Lord, and the spirit of God dwells in him. He will have to give away his all, sacrifice his all, and work for the good of mankind. That is why Jesus told his followers that they were the salt of the earth, and the light of the world. And their light should so shine before them as to reveal the greatness and glory of their Father who is in Heaven. Indeed, there have appeared before us, from age to age, heroes among men who have lived, worked, and died for the glory of God and the good of mankind. Such was Jesus Christ, such was Gautama Buddha, and such were Sankaracharya, Ramkrishna, and Swami Vivekananda in our land. These are the men who hold up, before a deluded world, the torch of love, faith, and hope. They have cheered many a dark and lonely hour of our life with their message of love and hope. Their love of God, their sorrows, sufferings, and glorious self-sacrifice have heartened us to work manfully, and do our duty in the midst of all our trials, misfortunes, and disappointments in life. There have been great heroes who have encouraged us to fight and die for the glory of the motherland. They have taught us that 'there are things greater than death.' Such was Miltiades, the victor of Marathon. Such was Hannibal, who fought against the mighty Roman Empire, and preferred death to disgrace. Such also was Horatius who plunged into the Tiber and perished for the honour and freedom of Rome. And in our country, there were gallant

patriots like Rana Pratap Singha of Mewar, Lakshmibai, Ranees of Jhansi, and the noble band of heroes and heroines who gave their lives for the glory of Rajasthan. Many of these heroic men and women died very early in life. Yet, the world remembers them and cherishes their memory with wonder, admiration, love, and gratitude. Jesus Christ laid down his life on the cross when he was a young man, with many years of life before him. Joan of Arc perished in flames when she was a girl. Keats died when he was only twenty-five, Shelley at thirty, and Byron at thirty-six. Their lives were as short as the flight of a meteor, but they had a meteoric brilliance, all their own. The day before he died, Shelley told his friends, "If I die tomorrow, I have lived to be older than my father. I am ninety years of age." As we read the poems of Shelley, we feel that every word of the poet has come true. We know very little about Shelley's father who lived long. But is there anybody in the world who will ever forget Shelley and his wonderful poetry? Indeed, in our careless moments, we never think that Keats, Shelley, and Lord Byron died so early. They still live in our memory, not for their years, but for their glorious poetry.

The world is no bed of roses. Our way in life is full of thorns and thistles. We shall have to pass through many dangers and difficulties, and overcome them manfully. In a word, we must be valiant soldiers in the battle of life. We must not be dumb, driven cattle, but heroes in the strife. Most of our great men had to face many trials and troubles in early life. Some of them had to spend long years of life in dark and dingy prison-cells for their love of truth and loyalty to the motherland. Yet, they defied all perils and did their duty. Galileo was cast into prison, when he told a foolish and ignorant people that the earth is round, and rolls round the sun. De Valera, the heroic founder of the Irish Republic, was sentenced to death by a British court of law. He lived in hiding for long years, before he leapt into light and won freedom for Ireland. Rana Pratap Singha had to spend many years of his life among hills and jungles, to carry on the battle of his country's freedom. Many of our leaders of India—Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Subhash Chandra Bose—spent long years of life in British jails. But their patriotism, heroic struggle for liberty, and brilliant self-sacrifice have made them immortal.

It may be that, in doing their duty, they met with failures. But their failures are more glorious than success. It is their great striving, their noble aspiration, that has made them great for ever.

These glorious men and women are the makers of history, and the shining examples of their lives are still before us. They teach

wealth, and comfort, and not for the light of knowledge or the joy of work.

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"We are such stuff  
As dreams are made on, and our little life  
Is rounded with a sleep."

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These great poets and thinkers look upon life as the most precious gift of God to man. They feel that it is the sacred duty of each and every man to work for the glory of God by love, repentance, suffering, and sacrifice. He should remember that he is the temple of the Living Lord, and the spirit of God dwells in him. He will have to give away his all, sacrifice his all, and work for the good of mankind. That is why Jesus told his followers that they were the salt of the earth, and the light of the world. And their light should so shine before them as to reveal the greatness and glory of their Father who is in Heaven. Indeed, there have appeared before us, from age to age, heroes among men who have lived, worked, and died for the glory of God and the good of mankind. Such was Jesus Christ, such was Gautama Buddha, and such were Sankaracharya, Ramkrishna, and Swami Vivekananda in our land. These are the men who hold up, before a deluded world, the torch of love, faith, and hope. They have cheered many a dark and lonely hour of our life with their message of love and hope. Their love of God, their sorrows, sufferings, and glorious self-sacrifice have heartened us to work manfully, and do our duty in the midst of all our trials, misfortunes, and disappointments in life. There have been great heroes who have encouraged us to fight and die for the glory of the motherland. They have taught us that 'there are things greater than death.' Such was Miltiades, the victor of Marathon. Such was Hannibal, who fought against the mighty Roman Empire, and preferred death to disgrace. Such also was Horatius who plunged into the Tiber and perished for the honour and freedom of Rome. And in our country, there were gallant

patriots like Rana Pratap Singha of Mewar, Lakshmbai, Rani of Jhansi, and the noble band of heroes and heroines who gave their lives for the glory of Rajasthan. Many of these heroic men and women died very early in life. Yet, the world remembers them and cherishes their memory with wonder, admiration, love, and gratitude. Jesus Christ laid down his life on the cross when he was a young man, with many years of life before him. Joan of Arc perished in flames when she was a girl. Keats died when he was only twenty-five, Shelley at thirty, and Byron at thirty-six. Their lives were as short as the flight of a meteor, but they had a meteoric brilliance, all their own. The day before he died, Shelley told his friends, "If I die tomorrow, I have lived to be older than my father. I am ninety years of age." As we read the poems of Shelley, we feel that every word of the poet has come true. We know very little about Shelley's father who lived long. But is there anybody in the world who will ever forget Shelley and his wonderful poetry? Indeed, in our careless moments, we never think that Keats, Shelley, and Lord Byron died so early. They still live in our memory, not for their years, but for their glorious poetry.

The world is no bed of roses. Our way in life is full of thorns and thistles. We shall have to pass through many dangers and difficulties, and overcome them manfully. In a word, we must be valiant soldiers in the battle of life. We must not be dumb, driven cattle, but heroes in the strife. Most of our great men had to face many trials and troubles in early life. Some of them had to spend long years of life in dark and dingy prison-cells for their love of truth and loyalty to the motherland. Yet, they defied all perils and did their duty. Galileo was cast into prison, when he told a foolish and ignorant people that the earth is round, and rolls round the sun. De Valera, the heroic founder of the Irish Republic, was sentenced to death by a British court of law. He lived in hiding for long years, before he leapt into light and won freedom for Ireland. Rana Pratap Singha had to spend many years of his life among hills and jungles, to carry on the battle of his country's freedom. Many of our leaders of India—Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Subhash Chandra Bose—spent long years of life in British jails. But their patriotism, heroic struggle for liberty, and brilliant self-sacrifice have made them immortal.

It may be that, in doing their duty, they met with failures. But their failures are more glorious than success. It is their great striving, their noble aspiration, that has made them great for ever.

These glorious men and women are the makers of history, and the shining examples of their lives are still before us. They teach

us that life is not worth living, unless it is crowned with noble and glorious deeds. As we read the lives of these great men, we are reminded of Shelley when he sings,

"Good, great and joyous, beautiful and free ;  
This alone is Life, Joy, Empire, and Victory.

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'TIS NOT THE WHOLE OF LIFE TO LIVE,  
NOR ALL OF DEATH TO DIE.'

'Life is earnest, life is real'. These are the words in which a great poet reveals his ideal of life. He calls upon his readers not to trust in future, however pleasant it may seem to be. And he appeals to one and all to act in the living present, with heart within and God overhead. He refuses to believe that 'life is an empty dream' and the soul of man dies with his death.

If we think deeply, we shall find that every word of this great poet is true. God sends a man to the world with a noble mission in life. So every man on earth should follow a noble ideal, live for it, work for it, and even die for it. It is for him to toil and suffer at the call of duty. He should never listen to the foolish cry of those who sing, 'Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow you may die.'

Every man should remember that he is made in the image of God, and he is the temple of the Living Lord. It is not enough for us to enjoy life and pray to God with folded hands. God will not hear our prayer if we fail to love all His creatures, and work for the good of them all. Truly does the poet sing,

"He prayeth best who loveth best  
All things both great and small,  
For the great God who loveth us,  
He made and loveth all."

This is the ideal which has inspired all great men from age to age. This is the ideal which filled the hearts of Jesus Christ, Gautama Buddha, Sri Chaitanya, and Swami Vivekananda. They preached to the world the gospel of love, truth, justice, suffering, and self-sacrifice. That is why Jesus tells his followers, "Ye are the salt of the earth, and if the salt loseth his savour, wherewithal shall it be salted ?" He calls upon them to give away their all—their homes, possessions, and even those who are dear and near to them. Men will speak ill of them, revile

them, and torture them. Yet, they must carry on, giving the light of truth and the blessings of love and charity to all mankind. And Jesus proved his faith when he died on the cross for his love of man.

Indeed, all the great religious teachers of the world were servants of God, who had given a new light to the world, and filled the hearts of men with faith, hope, love, and charity. They taught all the world to believe in the brotherhood of man in the kingdom of God.

But there are great men in other spheres of life who have deep faith in the gospel of work—work which is the grand cure of all maladies. It gives us health, energy, and faith in the living spirit of God—the spirit that is behind all the world of man and Nature. It is work which dispels all evil thoughts from the mind, and fills it with the love of duty. That is why, from age to age, there have appeared in the world men with a burning passion for knowledge and service. It is this passion which has thrilled the hearts of great savants, scientists, and explorers in their quest of knowledge. It is this which has enabled them to brave the perils of the sea, climb the snow-clad peaks of lofty mountains, and fly to giddy heights to have a glimpse of the glory, grandeur, and mystery of the kingdom of the stars. It is in this spirit that Columbus sailed in three old and worn-out ships in the uncharted seas. And it is the same spirit that has thrilled the hearts of mountaineers in their daring efforts to reach the crest of Mount Everest. Many of these great heroes perished in blast and cold. Yet, the ideal was never abandoned. And it was left to Tenzing and Hillary to reach the highest peak in the world, and hoist the standard of victory. It is the same spirit that has thrilled the hearts of great patriots who lived, worked, and died for the glory of the motherland. These glorious heroes did not, for a moment, think of their own comfort and ease. They flung aside the pleasures of youth, the joys of life, and the ties of love and affection to work for a noble cause. And they worked on and on until they were crowned with victory, or died in their heroic devotion to duty. They realized that 'one crowded hour of glory is worth an age without a name.' They were heroes among men who felt that life is earnest, life is real. They knew also that even 'life piled on life' were all too little for the attainment of all knowledge. So, like Tennyson's Ulysses, they resolved 'to follow knowledge like a sinking star beyond the utmost bound of human thought.'

Life is struggle—life is action. A life of ease and indolence is no life at all. Those who are given to these ways of life

think as though to breathe is life. But men, who are worth the name, cry shame on such a life—a life which is little better than that of beasts who live a blind life within the brain. All great men realize that there is a divinity that shapes our ends, and the whole of life is not to live.

They live and work in the faith that the great and the good never die. They are not with those who think that man is a weary pilgrim in the journey of life. They do not believe that man is born merely to live the few years of his life on earth. Yet, there are poets who sing in moments of despair that our little life is rounded by a sleep, and passes away for ever. This is how the vast masses of men think of life. And indeed Hamlet's last words were, 'The rest is silence'. But we should remember that there are noble and pious men who leave behind them glowing examples of love, heroism, charity, and self-sacrifice. These are examples that live in the hearts of men for ever, and inspire them from generation to generation. High are their names in every home and their glorious deeds shine, not only in the pages of history but also in the hearts of millions of men and women. Shakespeare and Rabindranath have passed away from the earth, but their poetry and message of faith, hope, and love will live for ever.

It is this noble ideal which has been nobly expressed by Wordsworth in his famous 'Ode on the Intimations of Immortality' :

"Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting ;  
The Soul that rises within us, our life's Star,  
Hath had elsewhere its setting,  
And cometh from afar ;  
Not in entire forgetfulness,  
And not in utter nakedness,  
But trailing clouds of glory do we come  
From God, who is our home."

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#### WE MAKE OUR FORTUNE AND CALL IT FATE

"The moving Finger writes ; and, having writ,  
Moves on ; nor all your piety nor wit  
Shall lure it back to cancel half a Line,  
Nor all your Tears wash a Word of it."

This is the song in which the great Persian poet, Omar Khayyam, sings of the fate of man. And most of us are inclined to think that the die is cast as soon as we are born, and

what is written cannot be unwritten. So, the world moves on, come what may. But it is the philosophy of idlers—men who long to live in the land of Lotus Eaters described by Tennyson in one of his finest poems. They like to echo the words of the poet and sing unto themselves :

"Death is the end of life ; ah, why  
Should life all labour be ?"

This is the faith that moulds the lives of the vast majority of men and women in our country. And that is why India is crowded with palmists and astrologers who sit on the pavements of the streets of great cities, and tell the fortunes of the passers-by. There are some well-known astrologers, who have cosy chambers of their own, where bands of men and women come everyday to read their fate. In this respect women are much more credulous than men. They think more of the future than of the present. In his *Bengal Peasant Life*, Rev. Lal Behari Dey has exposed the fooleries of these men with his usual wit and humour. There he tells the story of a village astrologer who enjoyed great fame, though he duped thousands of men and women with false hopes, from year to year. The writer tells us how, one day, three young men turned the tables on him. They proved this man to be a false prophet—a man who had deceived many innocent people by his wiles.

This is one of the reasons for which India has not been able to make much progress in science, arts, and industries. The vast masses of our people are illiterate and do not try, heart and soul, to brighten their prospects in life. If we go to the countryside, we shall find any number of men, who do not care to work at all. They are seen seated on the floors of tiny huts, smoking tobacco, and telling their friends that God's will must be done, and man can do nothing by his own efforts. The same feeling is also found among many educated men, who waste their lives away in reading philosophy and dreaming dreams. It is a good thing to read philosophy which dwells on the relations between God and the mysterious universe. It holds out hopes of immortality to man and calls on him to walk in the ways of God. But we judge philosophy wrongly when we think that it teaches us to be idle and careless dreamers, without a thought of the world we live in and the duties to be done. Indeed, modern philosophy teaches us that God is revealed in and through the universe and 'Metaphysics is the Queen of Science'. It is the same feeling with which Jesus tells his disciples, "Not everyone that sayeth unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven ; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in Heaven."

That is why Carlyle preaches to all the world the gospel of work—work which is the grand cure of all maladies. And if man follows the wise advice of this great sage, he will be able to do his duties on earth, and feel the joy of life in every limb. He will find that honest labour has its reward. It is not given to every man to make a fortune by a stroke of good luck. 'Aladin's Lamp' can be lighted only in a dreamland of poetic fancy. Man must toil not only for his bread but also for the light of knowledge. Every moment of his life, he should feel that the spirit of God dwells in him. He is indeed the temple of the Living Lord.

He will feel that there is nothing nobler, purer, and more cheering than work. It is this faith that moved many eminent scientists of the world. Newton was working everyday of his life to wrest more and more secrets from the bosom of Nature. It was by his untiring labours that he discovered the Law of Gravitation. And it was by the ceaseless industry of years that Marconi was able to send wireless messages across the Atlantic. It was this confidence that led Columbus to sail on the uncharted seas in quest of new worlds. In his 'Ulysses', Tennyson voices the feelings of these men of action who believe in their own strength, energy, and passion for knowledge, above everything else. Tennyson's Ulysses returns home after many years of wandering in strange lands, and perilous seas forelorn. Yet, he does not like to rest in peace. He tells his sailors that even old age has its reward, and some work of noble note may yet be done. So, in the evening of life, he sails, once again, to discover new worlds—to strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield. Storms, tempests, and the perils of the sea have no terror for him. He is resolved to work to the last day of his life. He will drink life to the lees. He does not care for fate, or the smiles and frowns of fortune.

This is the spirit which, to our mind, should move every man and woman in the prime of life. There are, no doubt, men, here and there, who are favoured by fortune. But they are rare, and the world cares little for them. It is also a fact that, most often, fortune favours the fool. We love and respect men who have defied the challenge of poverty and misfortune, and made their mark in the world by their merit, diligence, industry, and faith in the gospel of work. Such were Napoleon Bonaparte, George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, and Henry Ford. They were men who were not scared away by the sallies of fate, and worked on and on, until they rose to the giddy heights of power and glory. Rana Pratap Singh of Mewar, Sivaji, the founder of Marhatta Empire, and Lakshimbai, Ranees of Jhansi, were never cowed by the grim irony of fate.

They met with many failures and disasters, but their failure was more glorious than victory. When we read the story of their lives, we feel, 'O Death, where is thy sting?'

It is only a coward who thinks that man is ruled by fate, and he need not stir and strive, either for himself, or the good of the world around him. But it is we who make or mar our own fortune. If we work with loving faith in God and a clear sense of duty, we shall be able to carve out our ways in the world. We may not earn great fame or become immensely rich. But we shall surely be able to live clean, straight, and honourable lives, if we work honestly, diligently, and confidently. And we shall be surprised to find that we have gone far beyond our hopes and dreams. In a word, we shall be able to build our own fortune. But many of us waste away precious years of life in cursing fate and dreaming dreams. Yet, the truth is that our failures are mostly due to our own faults. We do not read to make ourselves wise. We do not work to gain the light of knowledge and the blessings of health. We do not toil to earn ample wages for our labours. We look upon the future as a dark and dreary blank. The result is that we meet with many disappointments that take away from us the zest of life. We cannot enjoy light if there be no darkness in the world. We cannot feel the charm of the deep blue sky and cheerful sunshine, unless we have seen dark days with cloudy skies, bleak winds, and blinding rain. So, we cannot enjoy life if we have never tasted the cup of sorrow. That is why we should not be disheartened or depressed by sorrows and sufferings, if and when they come. We should work on and on, and a day will surely come when we shall reap the fruit of our labours. We shall then feel that life is not an empty dream. We shall realize, in the words of the poet, that

'All are architects of Fate,  
Working in these walls of Time.'

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### SWEET ARE THE USES OF ADVERSITY

These are the words with which the banished Duke, in Shakespeare's *As you Like It*, consoles his friends and followers in the forest of Arden. He has seen the cruelty, selfishness, and ingratitude of men in high life. So, he feels that it is much better to live in poverty and obscurity, than amid the pomp and splendour of the court. There are many great sages, poets, and

philosophers who have spoken of the blessings of poverty. It is now about two thousand years ago that Jesus Christ called upon his disciples to take the vow of poverty. He told them that it was easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to go to Heaven. He reminded them of the life of eternal bliss in Heaven and the treasures that await man in the house of God. "Lay not up," he said, "for yourselves treasures upon earth.....but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal." The followers of Gautama Buddha have to take the vow of purity, chastity, and poverty. They have to abandon all their earthly possessions, and break off all social ties. It is their duty to wander from door to door, and land to land, preaching the gospel of love, peace, and charity to all the world. This was also the gospel of Ramkrishna and Vivekananda that attracted admirers from beyond the seas, and among them was Miss Margaret Noble—Sister Nivedita—of hallowed memory. It was this feeling that inspired holy men in all ages, to spend their days in silent meditation in lonely caves amid the snows of the Himalayas. And this is the spirit which attracts even now devout Christians to live simple and austere lives in monasteries and convents. All the world admires the pious work of these holy fathers, brothers, and sisters. The call of humanity thrilled the heart of Florence Nightingale, when she flung aside the joys of a happy home and rushed, with her band of faithful nurses, to the field hospital in the Crimea. And the world still remembers with gratitude her noble work in nursing the sick and the wounded, in a far-flung theatre of war across the seas. Indeed, all wise men look upon the stings of poverty as blessings in disguise. The way to Heaven, they feel, is not through the 'primrose paths of dalliance', but through the trials, troubles, and tribulations of life. God afflicted Job to test his love, faith, and piety. Job lost all his oxen, sheep, and camels, and even his sons and daughters. He was turned into a pauper and afflicted with sore boils. Yet he never lost his faith in God and cried out to his friends, "The Lord hath given, the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." And the Lord blessed Job, called back to life all his sons and daughters, and gave him twice the riches he had lost.

Our life on earth is a long tale of sorrows and sufferings. We snatch moments of joy in the midst of years of sorrow. That is why the poet sings,

"Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought."

There are teeming millions of men and women all over the world who cannot get two square meals a day. Their lives

are blighted by poverty, hunger, and unbearable sufferings. But among them are jewels who rise above all the toil, trouble, and afflictions of life, and give unto the world the light that is in them. They are men who are chastened by sorrows and sufferings, and learn to realize that there is nothing so sweet as the call of God to religious life. They forget hunger and pain in the joy of loving God and dedicating their lives to the service of humanity. Some of these men are blessed by God with wealth and affluence as a reward of their love, charity, sufferings, and sacrifices. But even then they never forget their days of struggle, and give away with the right hand what they have earned with the left. This is the secret of the great charities of men like Henry Ford, Rockefeller, and many commercial magnates of the East and the West. This is the secret of the simple, severe, and austere lives of the great religious teachers of the past and the present.

There is yet another reason for which adversity is often looked upon as a token of God's grace to man. Years of adversity in early life make a man wise, honest, hardworking, and charitable. Such a man works cheerfully for the good of mankind. It is a pleasure to see how poor men, all over the world, are working in the mines, mills, and factories, from morning till evening, out of a supreme sense of duty to their brothers, sisters, wives, and children. They forget their toil in the joy of doing their duty in life. Among the middle class families of India, the silent suffering and self-sacrifice of our women is simply wonderful. They do not think of riches, health, or comfort. They work all day long, and till the late hours of the night, most heartily and cheerfully for the peace and happiness of their beloved husbands and children. We often feel that it is the dire poverty of vast masses of men that have reared among them real heroes and heroines, many of whom live and die, unsung and unknown. Truly does the poet sing,

"Full many a flower is born to blush unseen  
And waste its sweetness on the desert air."

And these are the men and women who are the backbone of society—the pulse of the machine.

Lastly, we can never enjoy the pleasures of life, unless we have known the woes of poverty, hunger, and disease. This is the law of Nature. No man would ever feel the blessings of light, if he had never been in the midst of darkness. Day follows night, and night follows day. That is why we make the best of the day, for night comes when no man can work.

It is, therefore, our sacred duty to bow to the will of God and accept gratefully all His gifts. He may give us years of

happiness out of His abounding grace and mercy. He may also send us days of toil, affliction, and poverty to try us for our sins. But He is always kind and just, and has the good of us all at heart. We must bear in mind that, if we suffer here on earth, we shall enjoy eternal bliss in Heaven. And we should feel that the soul never dies, and sweet are the uses of adversity. Indeed, we are, as the poet sings, 'trailing clouds of glory' coming from God, who is our home.

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### CHILD IS FATHER OF THE MAN

The child shows the man as morning shows the day. A bright and sunny morning holds out the hope of a bright and cheerful day. Similarly, the freaks and fancies of a little child give us an idea of what he is going to be when he grows into a man. There are children who are fond of looking at the sun, moon, and the stars more than anything else. There are children that dance in joy when the skylark sings from among the heavens. And there are children that like to stay out of home and enjoy the beauty of the hills, woods, and streams for long hours in the day.

And we have also known little children who love sports above all else. They will run, leap, swim, and try to shoot birds with airguns. They are more alert, active, and bolder than their fellows. And we feel that they have in them the makings of soldiers, sailors, and sportsmen. From their likes and dislikes one may get some idea of the future of these children. We read in the life of Wordsworth that he was always fond of wandering among hills and dales, hearing the sweet murmur of the little streams, or listening to the song of the cuckoo or the woodland linnet from among the trees. It has been rightly observed that Wordsworth received his real education in Dame Nature's Open Air School. And we know how, in the fulness of time, he rose to be the poet, philosopher, and priest of Nature. We are told that Newton was fond of making little things and running against the wind to see which way it was blowing. He also made a little windmill and a sundial that stand even to this day. These early inclinations of his life showed that he would become a scientist. He watched every little thing with great care and thought deeply over it. And it was the dropping of an apple to the ground that led him to think deeply for months and discover the Law of Gravitation. Raphael was the son of an Italian painter, and tried to imitate his father when he was a child.

And we know how, with the years, he became one of the greatest painters of the world. His portrait of 'The Madonna' is regarded as the finest picture ever seen by man. Rabindranath Tagore tells us, in his early memoirs, that he was very fond of looking at the large banian tree that stood by the side of a tank in the garden of his ancestral house at Jorasanko, and hear the birds sing from among its leaves. Sometimes he was so absorbed in thought that he felt as if he himself was growing into a tree. With his saintly father he travelled in many parts of India, seeing the beauty of her mountains, snowfields, lakes, rivers, and seas. He was attracted by the beauty, grandeur, and glory of what he saw, and every sweet strain of music rang in his memory. He had also been to his father's estates in East Bengal, on the banks of the Padma, and seen the beauty of mighty rivers, smiling cornfields, and woodlands green. It was his love for all these things in the earliest years of life that made of him a great poet and artist. His joyous and lively interest in the smiles, frowns, and songs of Nature, made him the greatest poet of the world in his times, a great musician, and also a talented artist. It fills us with wonder when we think that Rabindranath was the singer and composer of more than three thousand songs—songs that are sung from end to end of India everyday. The influence of these songs is so wide that one may hear even a common day-labourer, in the remotest villages of Bengal, singing a song of Rabindranath at the end of his day's toil. These are songs that are sung not only by little boys and girls, but also by men and women in cultured and enlightened society. It is not generally known that Rabindranath was also an excellent painter. His landscapes are most beautiful and original, and have won the admiration of great artists all over the world. We are told that, in his childhood, the poet was more fond of singing and watching the beauty of Nature than reading his books. He had been at school only for a short time, and for the rest of his life, he read and enjoyed just as he liked.

The childhood of Mahatma Gandhi tells the same story. His love of truth and devotion to duty in childhood were reflected in the advanced years of his life. Indeed, this high sense of duty and love of truth never left him all through the crowded years of his life, and he laid down his life at the altar of truth, justice, and humanity.

It is true that childhood is not always an indication of the future. We are amazed when we hear that Maharshi Valmiki was a robber in the early years of his life. It was a miracle that turned this robber into the poet and singer of the Ramayana. Mysterious are the ways of God, and wonderful changes come upon men from time to time. We are told that, in his early life,

St. Paul hated Christianity and persecuted the Christians mercilessly. But one day, he heard the call of the Lord and became one of the most devoted apostles of Christ. And for his love and faith he was beheaded by order of Nero, the vilest and cruellest Emperor of Rome.

But these are exceptions that prove the rule. More often than not, we find that a child shows signs which throw a good deal of light on his future. The glorious history of the Huxleys and the Curies tell the same tale. All the children of these families inherited their parents' love of science. From their earliest years, they were curious to know the secrets of Nature and the mysteries of science. They watched their parents at work and felt more and more interested in it. Their lives are shining examples of the dreams of childhood fulfilled in later life. How truly does Wordsworth sing :

"My heart leaps up when I behold  
A rainbow in the sky ;  
So was it when my life began,  
So is it now I am a man,  
So be it when I grow old ,  
Or let me die !  
The Child is father of the Man."

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### THE INFLUENCE OF EXAMPLES

Examples are better than precepts. This is an old and wise saying, every word of which is true. The world has heard many prophets and preachers, but the words spoken by most of them are now forgotten. Yet, we still remember the great sayings of Jesus Christ, Gautama Buddha, Sri Ramkrishna, and Vivekananda. This is because all these great men practised what they preached. Jesus Christ gave away his all, lived and suffered for the good of mankind, and died on the cross for giving to the world the light of love and truth. Gautama Buddha left his wife and child, and devoted the rest of his life to penance, meditation, and prayer. He too was seeking the light of truth and a way of escape from death, which has turned the world into a vale of tears. Sri Ramkrishna and Swami Vivekananda renounced the world and turned mendicants to bring the blessings of God to mankind. That is why Jesus Christ tells his disciples, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven." He called upon them to give away their all, go out into the world, and radiate the light of love and

truth all about them. They listened to the voice of the Lord and carried His message to every door. For this they had to suffer terribly and long. Many of them perished in flames, or were stoned to death. Yet, they never fainted or faltered and bore the torch of God before mankind. That is why the world remembers their sufferings, sacrifices, and words of wisdom, with love and gratitude. There have indeed been great men in our time who have revealed the ideal of Christ in their own lives. It was said of Mahatma Gandhi that he was the only Christian after Christ. And truly when all Europe was in the throes of a World War, in which Christian nations were fighting one another with all the terrible weapons of destruction in their armoury, this living star of the East was preaching the gospel of truth, love, and non-violence with all the warmth of his heart. Time and again, he called upon his countrymen to shed all evils from their thoughts in their struggle for freedom. He pleaded to them to conquer force by silent suffering, and return love for hatred. But he was far above the men of his times, and his soul was 'like a star that dwelt apart'. The vast masses of men and women of South Africa and of India were attracted by his ideal, but they failed to follow him in thought, word, and deed. There were times when they broke into violence and disorder, and the Mahatma fasted and prayed for the return of good sense to these misguided men. In the closing years of his life, he preached the ideals of love, forgiveness, and unity between Hindus and Muslims. For this he was abused, insulted, and even threatened with violence on many an occasion. But he did not mind, and worked steadily for the success of his noble mission in life. The great Calcutta Killing of 1946 was followed by horrible atrocities in Noakhali in East Bengal. The whole country was struck dumb with horror, and everywhere men were longing for revenge and retaliation. The cry of 'an eye for an eye', and 'a tooth for a tooth' was in the air. It was in those dark days that, with a band of faithful followers, Mahatma Gandhi went on a pilgrimage of love to Noakhali. There he wandered from village to village, and door to door, to preach the gospel of love and non-violence. He had to walk along muddy roads and cross slender bridges over many a channel and stream in the bitter, biting cold of winter. Yet, he carried on, and called upon his followers to sing the well-known song of Rabindranath, to cheer them up on the lonely way :

"If no one comes at thy call,  
Do not falter, do not fall,  
Go thy way, long and lone,  
Alone, alone, all alone."

This was the song that gave him joy and peace in many a

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\* Translated by the author.

dark hour of his life, and filled his heart with courage, hope, and confidence. It was this courage that led him to his prayer meeting in Delhi and die at the hands of a fanatic.

Examples are better than precepts, just as the really good things of life appeal to us much more strongly than the abstract principles of morality. Sometimes these jar on our ears, and we feel sick of them. Truly does Carlyle tell us that, 'there is a good deal of advising but very little faithful performing, and talk that does not end in action is better suppressed altogether.' There are echoes of this feeling of weariness in the Book of Job in the Bible. God afflicted Job to test his faith and piety. All his sheep and lambs were lost, his sons and daughters died one after another, and he was afflicted with sores from the toe of his feet to his crown. His three friends came to console him. They gave him many a word of advice and would not let him rest in peace. At last Job lost his patience and told his friends, "No doubt but ye are the wise men, and wisdom shall die with you." Indeed, very often these moral lessons are most immoral in their influence on young lives. They stir in young men and women bitter dislike for moral lessons which are old, worn-out, and dry as dust. That is why it should be the humble endeavour of each and every one of us not only to give words of advice, but also to make the best use of the gifts that we have received at the hands of God. It is open to us to live clean and straight lives. It is open to us to work for the good of the country—to nurse the sick, to help poor boys with books, to bring relief to the doors of the suffering, and spread the light of knowledge among the people living in the villages. If we mix and toil with them, they will be heartened and encouraged in their work of clearing the jungles, sinking wells, and tilling the soil to raise crops. Mere words of advice, distribution of pamphlets, and messages from great men will be able to do little or nothing. They will act as irritants to men who are pining away in hunger, poverty, and dirt.

The highest ideal of life is to work in the light of truth in a spirit of love, charity, and service. These are the things that make life worth living. Those who live in a Palace of Art can never be happy in life. Knowledge without charity is no knowledge at all. The teacher who cannot inspire his students with the example of his own life is no teacher at all. His talents will be of no use to them. The priest who lives in his cloister and preaches in the church, from time to time, will never be able to kindle the love of God in the hearts of his audience. Such a priest can never be said to be a true and faithful follower of the religion he preaches.

We love to read the lives of great men as they are shining examples of devotion to truth and learning, and love of God and

men. Many of them were inspired by the highest ideals of courage, heroism, and selfless love for the motherland. Truly does the poet sing,

"Lives of great men all remind us  
We can make our lives sublime,  
And, departing, leave behind us  
Footprints on the sands of time."

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## ROME WAS NOT BUILT IN A DAY

or

"The heights by great men reached and kept  
Were not attained by sudden flight."

All the great things of the world are the fruits of long years of patient and laborious work. The lives of great men and the glorious works of art, all the world over, were not moulded in a day. Many a great man rose to eminence by diligence and single-minded devotion to his ideal in life. Napoleon Bonaparte came of a poor family of Corsica. He received his early education and military training in Paris. He had to spend seven long years in Paris with no friends, a lean purse, and very poor knowledge of the French language. His future was not at all rosy. Yet, we are told that the grey horizon only steeled him to his duty. He did not lose heart or hope, and worked the harder to brighten his chances in life. This is how a man, who began his career as a humble soldier of the Revolution, rose to be the ruler of a vast empire and the greatest general of the world in his day. Bernard Shaw tells us that, during the first nine years of his literary career, he was neglected and turned away by publishers. But he worked on, and became the greatest English dramatist after Shakespeare. And today the world hangs on a word of Bernard Shaw. He died only the other day after a long life of more than ninety years, but his great name will live for ever. Columbus discovered America after long years of cold and callous neglect, and many months of patient suffering on the high seas. Such was also the career of George Washington, the hero of the War of American Independence, and such was also the life of Shakespeare, the king of dramatists. Here in India Shivaji built up the Marhatta Empire, and Ranjit Singh became the Lion of the Panjab after long years of laborious work and heroic struggle. So, it must be conceded that all great deeds are most often the achievements of men who have earned them by their sweat, toil, and tears.

There are, no doubt, some great men who are favoured by fortune. They leap into fame in no time, but their number is very small. Rabindranath Tagore was warmly appreciated as a poet and singer very early in life. H. G. Wells won glory and fame in the very beginning of his career. Sankaracharya and Ramanuja were born men of genius. But men like them are rare. Most of our great men had to work hard and long to win success. They had even to suffer at the hands of fools and fanatics. Galileo was thrown into prison, when he declared that the earth is rolling round the sun. Milton had to spend the last days of his life in sorrow and shame in the days of Charles the Second. Napoleon himself was thrown into prison for some time, when he fell under the shadow of suspicion. Such was the life of Stalin, Maxim Gorky, and many of the heroes in man's long struggle for freedom. Among them are men like, Sri Aurobindo Ghosh, Mahatma Gandhi, Subhas Chandra Bose, and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. Indeed, history tells us that the rebel of today is the ruler of tomorrow.

We hear now-a-days of *National Planning*—great schemes for the industrial, agricultural, and commercial development of the country. We are thinking of building up great industries for the manufacture of machines and plants, fertilizing barren lands and deserts, and turning out motor cars, aeroplanes, and indeed many other things that go to the making of a happy, contented, and prosperous nation. Our great scientists and builders are framing schemes of national welfare after long years of study, research, and deep thinking. It seems to us as if they are very slow. But we should remember that Rome was not built in a day. The labour of great American scientists and engineers have fertilized the desert of California with water drawn from rivers, hundreds of miles away. In Russia they have worked wonders, and we are told that they can even transplant buildings from one place to another. And all these miracles of science are not the work of a day. They are the gifts of many brains that have worked for years and years to find ways and means for the industrial, agricultural, and scientific development of Russia.

The great Roman Empire was the work of centuries. When we read the history of Rome, we find how the people of a small city conquered, one after another, all the land of Italy, in which lived men of many tribes and races. These were united in course of time, enjoyed the blessings of a free people, and conquered almost the whole of Europe and vast territories in Asia and Africa. But this was not the end of their great work. They connected all the distant parts of their far-flung empire with a network of roads, and erected splendid towers, temples, theatres, and palaces that are still the wonder of the world.

Through the long years of their rule, they gave to the world eminent poets, historians, and law-givers. Indeed, the laws of Rome are the very foundation of the laws which govern the civilized world to this day. And for all this they worked for centuries. We should follow their example, and work for the good of humanity with faith, hope, courage, and confidence.

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### THE TALKIE AND THE STAGE

In these days the talkie has excelled the stage in many ways. It attracts a much larger audience than the stage. Indeed, there are very few men and women, who attend the theatre for amusement and recreation. Yet, from the earliest times the stage has played a very important part in the social life of the people. The kings of ancient India encouraged the plays of eminent dramatists like Kalidasa and Bhababhuti. The drama was, to them, a thing of beauty and a joy for ever. They did not like plays with a sad end. Every ancient drama of our country is a comedy. It ends in a happy union amid scenes of joy. No one, in those happy times, ever attended a play to sigh or weep. In ancient Greece the dramas played on the stage were widely admired and largely attended. English drama was nursed in the cradle of religion. It was the priests who staged dramas in the sacred precincts of the church. These dramas presented scenes from the English Bible, and often depicted the lives of saints and martyrs. They were presented on the stage not only to amuse but also to teach the people the lessons of religion.

In course of time, these dramas changed their character with the changing tastes of the people. They became more and more artistic and reached their highest excellence and perfection in the hands of Shakespeare. And to this day, Shakespeare's memorable dramas, like *Hamlet*, *Twelfth Night*, and *Midsummer Night's Dream*, hold the stage and attract a large and enlightened audience.

Yet, the talkie has become much more popular in recent times. We live in a restless age, when there is a bitter struggle for existence among the vast masses of our people. Even those who are above wants are deeply absorbed in trade, commerce, and politics. Aristotle once said that man is a political animal. This was true, in a degree, in ancient Greece. But today it is very true all over the world. A number of wars, warm or cold, are still raging in different parts of the world. Life has become not only exciting but also unsafe in this age of atom and hydrogen.

bombs. That is why we cannot live in peace, and are always thinking of the present as well as the future of the world we live in. There are men who are more interested in the debates of the parliament and fortunes of a war, than in dramas or cinema-shows. Yet, they prefer the cinema to the stage when they can make a little time for entertainment and diversion.

The talkie has also another charm which we often miss in a drama. The talkies display wonderful scenes of snow-capped mountains, mighty rivers, roaring oceans, volcanic outbursts, and terrible earthquakes. We see, on the screen, ships sinking in seas tossed by storms, sweeping air-raids, and grand armies marching across battlefields with the blowing of bugles and booming of cannon. The talkies also depict scenes of destruction, horror, and bloodshed that are relished by men who have a morbid craving for things that tickle the blood, and strike the heart with terror. There are also jungle scenes with wild animals roaming at large in dense forests, and scenes of love and romance in the midst of cool and shady arbours here and there. It is these wonders of natural scenery and the presentation of a wide variety of life, manners, and incidents that have made the talkie so popular. In our country, there are three shows a day in every Cinema House. Yet, they attract bumper crowds even in these days of scarcity. If we look at the Cinema Houses in Calcutta, with long queues awaiting their turn for buying tickets, we may have some idea of the vast popularity of films.

In the days of silent pictures, many people preferred the theatres, with their actors and actresses playing and singing in their colourful garments, on a stage sparkling with flash lights. It was the charm of hearing human voice that attracted the audience. But the talkie brought about a vast change in the world of pictures. For the first time, we have had the pleasure of seeing, on the screen, men and women who sang, danced, and played their parts gracefully. It was, in a word, a theatre on the screen. That is why the theatre has lost much of its popularity, and the talkie has become the craze of the day. Many of our actors are now playing for the cinemas and making their fortunes.

It is for this reason that the theatres are trying to reform themselves. They are staging short plays with plenty of song, dance, and scenery. In England there are Repertory Theatres, with their bands of actors and actresses, who wander from city to city and stage a large variety of short plays. They are slowly gaining ground. It must, however, be admitted that there are some plays of Shakespeare that still hold the stage. This is a tribute to the genius of the greatest dramatist of the world, and his plays are an exception that proves the rule.

In our times, there is a race for popularity between the modern theatre and the talkie. But as things stand, the talkie is vastly more popular. Yet, there are sincere admirers of the stage, who prefer to enjoy the acting and singing of real players to the shadowy figures on the screen. And, among the students and teachers of schools and colleges, the theatre is still highly popular.

We may conclude that the great art of acting and singing should be cultivated all over the world. We should remember that no education is complete without a taste for the finer arts of music, dancing, and acting. For this the stage, as well as the talkie, will always be useful. But the one should never replace the other in the interests of the healthy development of our social and cultural life.

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#### SUCCESS IN LIFE—ON WHAT IT DEPENDS

To choose a career in life is a most difficult problem. Every boy must read in a school to learn the elements of arts, letters, and sciences. But the question of choosing a career will arise as soon as the young learner leaves school.

That will be the time when his parents and teachers will be able to judge what the boy has learnt so far, and what is the calling in life for which he is fit. There may be a very brilliant and intelligent boy who loves to enjoy the grace, beauty, and charm of literature. He is much more interested in poetry and drama than in mathematics or science. Such a boy should at once be sent to the university to carry on higher studies in language and literature. He should never be sent to fell trees in a wood, plough the fields, or grind corn in a mill. Some of our greatest poets like Shakespeare, Milton, Browning, and Lord Byron always followed the bent of their own genius. They developed and refined their tastes by observing and enjoying the beauty and grandeur of natural scenery everywhere. That is why there are such beautiful and wonderful pictures of rivers, seas, hills, streams, and flowers in their poetry. Indeed, their poetry has been largely influenced not only by their wide reading but also by the sights they had seen and the beauty they had enjoyed. Ever since his childhood, Byron had a charm for the ocean. He felt a thrilling delight in swimming and swinging on the waves of the mighty deep. That is why he has described the wild beauty and grandeur of the ocean so vividly and wonderfully in his poetry.

Shelley's poetry is tinged with the beauty and sublimity of Alpine scenery. His famous 'Ode to the West Wind' is an echo of the storms and tempests that raged over the mountains among which he roamed at large from end to end of Europe. Wordsworth has described Nature as a realm of peace and harmony, as he lived the best years of his life near the lakes, the streams, and the green hills of Grasmere. Shakespeare has given us a bewildering variety of natural scenery in the pages of his great drama, as there was nothing beautiful and sublime that ever escaped his eye. Moreover, the long years of his life in London gave him a deep insight into human character. And it is this that has enabled him to create such a bewildering variety of men and women—heroes and heroines, lovers, singers, madmen, clowns, fools, fanatics, and devils in the guise of men.

Keats was apprenticed to a surgeon against his will. But his spirit revolted against the science of medicine, and he tells us how he felt when he listened to the lectures of his teachers in the class. "One day," he writes to a friend, "when I was attending my lecture, there came a sunbeam into the room, and with it a whole troop of creatures floating in the ray, and I was off with them to Oberon and fairyland." He left his medical studies and gave the few years of his short life to the study and culture of poetry. It is this which has enabled him to write his inimitable odes and lyrics and give to the world his 'Hyperion'—a poem that approaches Milton in its beauty and sublimity. He lived only for twenty-five years. Yet, we shall remember him for ever when we feel that 'a thing of beauty is a joy for ever'. His life is a vivid example of the blunder we often make in choosing a career in the early years of life. Newton and Marconi became great scientists, as they were allowed to follow their own tastes and inclinations in life. Indeed, we shall do well to remember that we must always allow a young man to give the fullest play to his natural tastes and talents.

There is, however, one thing which we notice in young men here and there. It so happens that a young man has no one to guide him, and he cannot find out what is really good for him. He is an unlucky man who wastes his energies and courts disappointment in a career which is not meant for him. That is why there are, among us, such a large number of unsuccessful lawyers, physicians, and businessmen. A man with literary tastes may take to business for the love of money. But he is sure to fail miserably in a line for which he has neither the talent nor the experience, which are needed for success. This is how Sir Walter Scott, the great poet and novelist, lost his all and incurred heavy debts by the failure of a publishing concern, of which he was a sleeping partner. On the other hand, Pitt

the Younger became one of the greatest Prime Ministers of England, as he was reared and trained under the influence of his father, the Earl of Chatham.

From this it will be clear that success in life depends not only on learning and talent, but also on the power of judging what is the most promising career for a young man on the threshold of life. It is this intuition, this power of judgment, which crowns the labours of great men with success—men like Shakespeare, Milton, Edmund Burke, Napoleon Bonaparte, and Frederick the Great. These men of genius devoted all their energies to the work which was most congenial to them. Their lives were crowned with glory, as they did not waste their labours even for a day.

Sometimes, success depends on our chances in life and the surroundings in the midst of which we are reared. There are lucky men who not only make a right choice of their career, but are also favoured with good chances in life. They are born in families which have been the home of plenty and culture from age to age. It is the very atmosphere in which they live that moulds their career and leads them on to success. Such was Milton, and such was the great Rabindranath Tagore in our own country. It is the cultural influence of his family which inclined Rabindranath to music, painting, and poetry. And in looking after his vast landed properties in East Bengal, he spent the happiest years of his life in his father's green boat on the Padma, amid the beauty and splendour of the riverside, smiling with woodlands green and shivering cornfields. It was his natural genius that was developed and perfected by his wide travels in the East and the West.

We may conclude that success depends on intelligence, industry, favourable opportunities in life, and the right choice of a career. And this is what, in Shakespeare's *Julius Cæsar*, Brutus tells Cassius on the eve of the fateful battle of Philippi :

"There are tides in the affairs of men,  
Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune ;  
Omitted, all the voyage of their life  
Is bound in shallows and in miseries."

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## PARTY SYSTEM

Party system is the backbone of politics in modern times. In ancient India there were kings who ruled over their people wisely. They were benevolent despots, who feared God and looked after the peace and happiness of the people entrusted to their care. The people of those days also looked upon their kings as gods, adored, and even worshipped them. This is the tradition which has come down to us from ancient times. There were, in those days, no parties and indeed no politics. England was also ruled, for a very long time, by kings who were backed by a servile parliament. But, late in the seventeenth century, there rose two political parties—the Whigs and the Tories. These were called Liberals and Conservatives in later times. But today the Liberals have no following, and they have almost disappeared from the arena of politics. The two dominant parties of England now are the Conservatives led by Sir Anthony Eden and the labour Party headed by Mr. Gaitskell.

In our country there are a number of political parties. But the most prominent among them are the Congress and the Communists. The majority of the people in many of the provinces are with the Congress. The Communists have a fairly large following in South India and West Bengal.

We do not agree with those who think that party-system is an evil. It is always desirable to have, in the parliament, an opposition that will fearlessly criticise the policy of the government, when the government has gone wrong. Such an opposition acts as a healthy check on nepotism, jobbery, and corruption. It stands as the defender of the rights and liberties of the people, and protests against the highhandedness of the police and officialdom in times of disorder and lawlessness. And the conflict between the government and the opposition awakens a good deal of interest among the people, who are educated in political problems. It keeps the vast masses of the people awake and alert to all that is happening around them from day to day. It makes the officials of the government very careful about all their actions. But party-system has its evils too. It creates a feeling of ill-will between the followers of rival parties. It encourages one party to undo the good work done by another. In this way, it delays national progress and unity. Schemes of development for the cultural and economic advancement of the country suffer for want of support from large masses of the people led by the opposition. It encourages the common enemy and creates a false impression among the people of foreign countries. What is worse, it demoralizes many good, intelligent, and honest men. They begin to think of every question in the light of party politics.

With the years, their minds are so infected with this poison that they find no good in men belonging to rival schools in politics. They begin to hate their opponents more than they hate foreigners. But this is not all. In times of election, the candidates set up by rival parties and their followers revile one another in the vilest and most filthy language. They spread falsehoods against their opponents in season and out of season. They create disorders and break up public meetings. They indulge in false personation at the polling booths. They quarrel, wrangle, and even fight with each other.

This poison also infects social life. We have seen that rival candidates will not sit at the same table at dinner, or even see the faces of those whom they dislike. And this mutual hatred is carried down from generation to generation. High officials of the government often try to influence elections. All these are great evils of the party system, as we find in our country. Yet, if the system is carried on in the right spirit, it may do great good to the country. It takes some time for a country to shed all evils and settle down. So, in England, it is now a real boon to the people and government of the country. It has made the government of England really responsible to the people. That is why no government in England dares to act against the wishes of the people. Any blunder made by the government is exposed to the searchlight of public opinion. The opposition is a friend of the government, in the sense that it induces the rulers of the land to act on the right lines. Any serious blunder or scandal made by a minister or officer of the government will be brought to public notice by the opposition. This will lead to the dismissal of the minister or even the downfall of the government. Mr. Lloyd George's Turkish policy led to the downfall of his government in twenty-four hours. He resigned and almost disappeared from public life. That is why the leader of the opposition in England is held in high regard. He is heard with respect, and consulted on every important question, affecting the interests of the country. The opposition, too, has a deep sense of responsibility. It does not criticise each and every act of the government. It supports the government when it is right, and opposes it when it is wrong. Many beneficent measures for the good of the people have been adopted by the British parliament with the consent and co-operation of the members of the opposition. That is why, no government in England will ever dare to appoint as ministers men who have been thrown out by the electorate. Nor will any government ever dare to smuggle its favourites into the cabinet through the backdoor.

But let us turn to England, once again. We still remember how all the parties stood, shoulder to shoulder, when the World

War broke out. They formed a Coalition Government and worked, heart and soul, to defend England against Germany and her allies. This is because all the parties in England realize that they are working for the good of the country. They may have different names but they have the same ideal before them. They are loyal to their king and country in the midst of all their party squabbles, and they never look to a foreign power for guidance. In 1914 there was a fierce clash between the government of the day and the Irish Republican Party led by Mr. Redmond. But when the war broke out, Mr. Redmond shook hands with the Premier, and pledged the faith, loyalty, and unflinching devotion of the Irish people to the cause of freedom.

Such a thing was possible as all the parties of England, at the present day, are guided by one single ideal. The staunchest opponents in parliament are often warmest friends in private life. Husband and wife, father and son, may belong to different schools in politics. But this has not, in the least, interfered with their sweet and tender relations at home.

We hope that the time is not far off, when the people of India will understand the real meaning of party politics, and grow into a strong, healthy, and powerful nation.

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### CITIZENSHIP OF INDEPENDENT INDIA

India is now a free country. And it is surely the duty of each and every citizen of India to see that this hard-earned freedom is never lost, and brings the blessings of peace and prosperity to the land of his fathers. The State has also its duties like the citizen's. But the State cannot do much without the active help and goodwill of its citizens. And the citizens too have their duties and obligations to the State.

In ancient times, the only link between the State and the people was one of bondage. There were powerful kings, to whom all the citizens of the State bowed in awe and wonder. The king's word was law. He was the ruler, the chief judge, and the supreme commander of the army of the State. His very breath was law. There were no doubt benevolent despots, here and there, who worked for the good of the people. In the Ramayana, we read the story of Rama-chandra, who sent his beloved wife into exile, when the people clamoured for it. There were also great kings like Asoka, Chandragupta, and Vikramaditya the Great in ancient India, who ruled wisely and earned the love and gratitude of their people.

But they are brilliant exceptions. As a rule, the kings were despots, and no man's life or liberty was safe under them. That is why the great empires of old perished with the ages. The downfall of the Moghul Empire was due to the cruel, despotic, and short-sighted policy of Aurangzeb. Indeed, the best security of a citizen is the charter of rights and liberties given to him by law. This is the reason why people, all over the world, desire those powers and privileges that are the birthright of every citizen of a civilized state. The Indian Constitution has guaranteed certain fundamental rights to the citizens of this country. But the Constitution has been amended from time to time. The power of the judges has been curbed, and in many cases the courts cannot interfere at all. These are things that do not make for independent and enlightened citizenship.

Every citizen of a free State has the liberty of thinking, speaking, and writing freely. He has also the right to criticize each and every act of the government. And he can appeal to the people to change the government in power. The same privilege is enjoyed by the press, which voices the feelings and sentiments of the people. But the citizen must remember that there is a limit to his liberty. In exercising his own rights, he must not interfere with the rights of others. In a word, he must bow to law and order, and cannot disturb the peace of the realm. There are men in our country who are always out to create trouble, organize strikes among labourers, and strain the cordial relations between the rulers and the ruled. They seize upon every opportunity to create disaffection among the students of schools and colleges. Whatever happens in the country, be it a tramway or dockyard strike, or a dispute over college unions, they call upon our young and impressionable boys and girls to stay away from their classes, go out in processions, and invite clashes with the police. They get into serious trouble, while the men who have excited them manage to keep out of harm's way. Things have now reached such a pass that Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru threatened to close down the University of Lucknow. We feel that our students should never forget that discipline is the backbone of school and college life. One of the objects of education is to teach them how to live a well-ordered and disciplined life. They must learn to obey authority, before they becomes rulers of men. 'Obedience is the bond of rule.'

We must also bear in mind that it is the first and foremost duty of a citizen to be loyal to the State. He must love his country and work for the advancement of the State. A crime against the State is treason in every civilized country. The State is, however, different from the government of the day. You can criticize, challenge, and overthrow the government during elections, but you must obey the State. In a word, we are sons of

Mother India, and we must not look to any foreign power for guidance, or allow it to interfere with the affairs of our own country. There was a bitter conflict between the Protestants and the Catholics in England in the days of Queen Elizabeth. That was why Philip II of Spain sent a huge fleet, called the Invincible Armada, to crush the English Protestants. But the Spaniards were rudely surprised when they found the Protestants and Roman Catholics fighting, shoulder to shoulder, for the honour, glory, and freedom of their motherland. Indeed, the English fleet was led by a Catholic, Lord Howard of Effingham. John Stuart Mill has rightly observed that eternal vigilance is the price of liberty. There are no doubt crises, in the history of every nation, when the people have the moral right to revolt against the tyranny of despotic rulers. Such was the bloodless Revolution of 1688 in England, the great American Revolution of 1776, the French Revolution of 1789, and the Revolution of 1848 in Italy. But there can be no question of revolution in a real democracy, which has been defined by Abraham Lincoln as 'government of the people, by the people, and for the people'.

The Union of India is a democracy. It has been faced with many problems. It has to guard the rights and liberties of the citizens of this great country. It has also to give bread to the hungry millions of India, and remove the curse of poverty and unemployment. We should surely urge them to speed up and work, heart and soul, for the peace, happiness, and prosperity of the people of India. But, at the same time, all of us must put our shoulders to the wheel, and work for the honour, glory, and welfare of our motherland.

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## RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF A CITIZEN

Every citizen has his rights and duties. He claims his rights from the State, but he has also many obligations to his mother-land. The real meaning of citizenship is much clearer today than it was in the past. In modern times the relations between the people and the State are much closer than they were in days long gone by. In the past, the duty of the State was to enforce law and order, and the duty of the citizen was to obey the government and the laws of the land he lived in.

In these days, the rights of a citizen are of three kinds—social, political, and economic. The citizen has the right to live peacefully in society, choose his own government, and earn his livelihood by honest labour. Of these, the last is the most pressing problem in every State. With the dawn of political consciousness, men and women, all over the world, are demanding not only employment but also higher wages for their labour, old age pension, and education for their children. They are also crying for fairer, healthier, and more humane conditions of work in mills, mines, and factories. And it must be said to the credit of many civilized countries of the West that they are marching with the spirit of the times. But the problem of unemployment and economic unrest is very keen in India. It is often said that the government cannot work a miracle overnight. This is true, but surely something could and should have been done in eight long years. That is why, communists are gaining ground everyday. They are winning thousands of followers among men living in 'poverty, hunger, and dirt'. But look at this picture and that. During the last general elections in England, the communists lost all the seats they held, and not one of them was returned to the British Parliament. This is due to the measures taken by the government of the United Kingdom to improve the condition of workers all over the country. On the whole, the labourers of England are healthy and cheerful. There the right of the citizen to live like a man has been recognized and the citizen has, in his turn, done his duty by working peacefully for the progress and prosperity of the state.

One of the most valued rights of the citizen is the freedom of thought, speech, and movement. A citizen of any independent state has the right to think and express his ideas freely. He must enjoy the blessings of a free press that will voice his feelings on each and every burning problem of the day. He must have the right to speak out his mind in public meetings or houses of parliament. He must have full liberty of moving from one place to another. Indeed, no government, worth its name, should interfere with his rights and liberties. They should remember that the ideal of government in the modern world is democracy, which

has been very finely described by Abraham Lincoln, as government of the people, by the people, and for the people.

The citizen, on the other hand, must remember that he must always be loyal to the State. The State, in our times, is the creation of the whole community, and the government is the organ through which the State carries on its work of ruling the country. The people have every right to criticise the government, and point out its errors. They may even agitate for the removal of the government. But they must always be faithful to the State, and never look to an outside power for help and guidance. This is the rule of conduct among the people of civilized nations, and history gives us many examples of this spirit of patriotism. When Philip II sent the Armada against England, he had counted on the sympathy and armed assistance of the Catholics of England. But he was sorely disappointed, and the Armada returned to Spain, shattered, battered, defeated, and disgraced. When the Armada was sighted, the Catholics and Protestants stood shoulder to shoulder to defend the honour and freedom of England. Indeed, the English fleet was commanded by a Catholic—Lord Howard of Effingham.

Such was also the spirit that united all the states of Greece and enabled them to defeat the Persians at the battle of Marathon. We had also had the pleasure of seeing the same wonderful spirit of loyalty and unity during the two World Wars.

The citizen of a free country has the right to vote freely at elections. Indeed, this is the most effective way in which he can express his views and choose a government that reflects the will of the majority of the people living in the land. This is now recognized in every civilized State. But this privilege was denied to the people of England for a long time. Indeed, for hundreds of years, members of parliament were elected from districts that were created in the days of Edward I.

In course of time, great industrial cities like Birmingham, Sheffield, Manchester, Glasgow, and the like, sprang up all over the country. Yet, these cities were not represented in Parliament for a long time. And many districts that had, in the nineteenth century, shrunk into small, depopulated villages sent members to Parliament.

We are told that there was a small village, called Old Sarum, that used to send a member to Parliament. There was, in this village, only one man with the right to vote. And the Elector of Old Sarum proposed himself, seconded himself, and had himself elected. This is the reason why there was a great agitation in England for parliamentary reform, and the British Parliament passed the Reform Bill of 1832, that abolished many old electoral

districts, created new ones, and gave the vote to the middle class. This was followed by many other reforms from time to time. And today, every citizen of England has the right to vote, unless he happens to be a minor, lunatic, or criminal. What is more, the citizens may influence public opinion so strongly that the government may be compelled to resign and appeal to the people even before the period of five years has elapsed. In India also, the constitution has set up a government which is democratic. But it has been robbed of its grace by the creation of special electorates, second chambers, and nominations. But we are sure that the time is not far off when we shall have a truly democratic government in our country.

The citizen of today is also demanding equality of rights, privileges, and social equality in every State. And it should surely be the duty of our rulers to level all distinctions of birth and wealth, and give culture, education, and social amenities to one and all.

The citizen should be always prepared to defend the State in every crisis, obey the laws of the land, and pay taxes. He must also take interest in politics and render social service at the call of duty. In a word, he must live, work, and die for his country.

One word more, and we have done. Every citizen should remember, at all times, that liberty does not mean licence. In claiming his own liberty, he must respect the rights of others. Live and let live—this is the ideal of life which should lead him in every sphere of life.

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### UNITED NATIONS ORGANIZATION

The United Nations Organization reflects man's longing for peace, happiness, and freedom in a world weary of war. In the course of about twenty-five years, two World Wars have shaken the earth to its foundations. The First World War broke out in 1914 and ended in 1918. In 1939 came the Second World War that continued for six long years. It was the most frightful war in the history of the world. Many beautiful cities and glorious works of art were destroyed, and millions of men, women, and children were killed by destructive air-raids. Men of science were compelled by their governments to invent dreadful weapons of destruction like the atom bomb, the hydrogen bomb, and the like. The Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki were destroyed by atom bombs dropped by the American air forces, and

almost all living things perished in flames. This was how Japan was compelled to surrender and sue for peace, and the war came to an end. Such a thing led many thinking people to realize that they would not be able to stand the horror and cruelty of a third World War. They thought that man would never enjoy real peace, until the people of all countries in the East and the West felt that they were citizens of the world. They found that all the States of the modern world were linked with one another in the sphere of trade and commerce, and the economic policy of one country deeply affected the well-being of the citizens of other countries of the world. And we find how, in these days, a strike among the workers of jute or steel industries in England will affect the cotton mills and the iron works of our country.

It is also clear that all the nations of the world should be bound, each to each, in ties of peace, good-will, charity, and brotherhood. The history of modern times has proved, beyond the shadow of a doubt, that sovereign national states will lead to wars and destruction. So, the leaders of nations during the great wars were right in thinking of a world organization that would go beyond the boundaries of states and spread over the globe.

The first of these organizations was The League of Nations, that came into being at the end of the First World War in 1918. The Covenant of the written constitution of the League of Nations, was adopted at the Peace Conference of 1919 at Versailles in France. It was formally opened in January, 1920, and joined by many countries of the world, including India. But Soviet Russia and the United States of America did not join it, and Germany was not allowed to join. Russia and Germany entered the League later on. But the United States of America kept out of it all along. The League aimed at bringing about international peace and security. Its ideal was to prevent war and keep the peace of the world. For this it called upon all the nations to limit their armaments. It also set up a permanent Court of International Justice at Hague to settle all disputes by arbitration. If any member of the League went to war with another, it would be declared to be at war with all the other members of the League. The Council of the League was authorized to take action against any country that violated the Covenant of the League of Nations. These measures were known as sanctions. But the League of Nations was powerless when Italy invaded Abyssinia and Japan grabbed Manchuria. Economic sanctions were applied against Italy, after a long time and with weak hands. So, the League failed miserably when it was put to the test. It was able to curb the ambitious designs of some small states, but it failed to take up the challenge of the big and powerful nations of the world. Indeed, it was never warmly supported by the big

states and, at the outbreak of the Second World War, it tumbled down like a house of cards.

That is why, the tired nations of the world began to devise means for creating another organization to keep the peace of the world. The United States of America took the lead and drew up a scheme, which was placed before a conference of the allied powers, who were fighting against Germany and her satellites. This conference was held at Dumberton Oaks in U. S. A. and reviewed at another conference at San Francisco. The United Nations Organization was the result of these consultations. It came into existence on October 24, 1945. The object of the United Nations Organization is to maintain peace and security all over the world, defend the rights, liberties, and privileges of all men, and settle all disputes between nations by peaceful means. It declared that all questions affecting the rights of nations must be settled by negotiation and not by war. It also set up a number of complementary organizations for promoting the culture, enlightenment, education, and social relations of men all over the world. The United Nations Organization consists of fifty-nine states and has six principal organs. These are the General Assembly, Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, the Trusteeship Council, the International Court of Justice, and the Secretariat. The most important among these bodies is the General Assembly, on which every member-nation is represented. It meets once a year and discusses various problems. It dwells on many political problems of world-wide importance and commands great respect. All resolutions placed before this assembly must be passed by a two-thirds majority.

The Executive Committee of the United Nations Organization is called the Security Council. It has twelve members, including representatives of U. S. A., Britain, Russia, Nationalist China, and France. These five are permanent members. The six other members are to be elected by the Assembly for two years, one half retiring every year. India was elected a member of the Executive Committee for two years, from 1949 to 1951. Mrs. Vijayluxmi Pandit presided over the last session of the United Nations in 1953. Military action against any defiant nation can be taken by a majority vote of the council, if only all the permanent members agree.

Around the United Nations, there are a number of organizations of varying importance and activities. The most well-known among these are the Social and Economic Council, International Monetary Fund, World Bank for Reconstruction and Development, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural organization, Food and Agricultural Organization, World Health Organization, and the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation

Administration. All these organizations are doing very excellent work among the nations of the world, as they are above all ambitious, selfish, or political motives. A division of the Social and Economic Council is known as the Commission for Human Rights. It has drawn up a code of human rights, for the guidance of the nations of the world. It is now considering a complaint from South African Indians against the Group Areas Bill, which isolates the coloured peoples of the country from the whites, and denies them the rights and privileges of South African citizens.

There is also the International Monetary Fund which enables the different countries of the world to trade with each other by allowing them facilities for buying foreign exchange. And it grants loans for construction and development as well. India's railways, and hydro-electric and river valley projects have been liberally financed by these loans.

The question is how far the United Nations Organization has succeeded in maintaining the peace and security of the world. We are now inclined to think that it is a mere tool in the hands of the big powers. No firm action can be taken without the consent of all the big powers, who can never be removed even by the vote of the majority. What is worse, one single power of this bloc can veto the decision of the whole council. We are told that Russia has exercised this veto more than forty times and created many a scene by walking out of its meetings. The freedom of the smaller nations is a dream. They are at the mercy of the great powers, and are often duped or forced to join one power bloc or another. It has been robbed of much of its usefulness by a number of economic and defence blocs set up in recent years, such as the Atlantic Pact or the Council of Europe. The affairs in Korea and South Africa are also a challenge to its authority. Its handling of the Kashmir problem reveals that it is influenced by deep political motives. India placed her case before the United Nations Organization, and requested it to decide who was the aggressor in Kashmir. The United Nations, led by U.S.A. and United Kingdom, evaded this issue, and have since been trying to support Pakistan in every possible way. The United States' military aid to Pakistan and Bagdad Pact will mean the end of the United Nations Organization and the end of peace in Middle East Asia.

It is now the duty of all the nations of the world, great and small, to unite and make of the U. N. O. a real world organization of free men all over the earth—men who will curb the greed and selfishness of the great powers, and work for the peace, happiness, and prosperity of mankind.

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## FIRST FIVE-YEAR PLAN

Economic planning is regarded as the best method of achieving the ideal of a welfare state. It aims at making the best use of the natural resources of a country and raising the standard of living of her people. India is rich in her natural resources. She is a land washed by the waves of the sea in the east, the west, and the south. Her fertile lands and smiling cornfields are watered by many rivers and streams. Her rich soil, hills, and mountains are full of precious minerals. That is why, in days long gone by, she was described by our poets as a land flowing with milk and honey.

But times are now changed. Her population has grown vastly during recent years, and she has to suffer terribly from the ravages of flood, famine, and earthquake, year after year. Again, there is, at times, too much of rain in some parts of the country, while in some others there is no rain for months and months. In a vast country like ours, we may escape these sufferings if we develop all our resources in a scientific spirit. And this can be done only by systematic planning, directed by the Government of India. So long as England ruled India, she did not care much for the welfare of the people. She looked upon this country as a vast market for her finished goods. India was regarded as an undeveloped country, fit for producing foodgrains and raw materials.

But, with the dawn of independence, our government has realized fully that the people of this ancient land must be lifted from the mire, and all the man-power and resources of the state are to be used with this end in view. That is why the Government of India set up a Planning Commission in 1950. The Commission first published a Draft Five-Year Plan in 1951, and circulated it for public opinion. The Final Five-Year Plan was published in December, 1952.

It is the first of a series of schemes that are expected to double the income, per head, of the people of India in the course of twenty-seven years. It will spend a huge sum of two thousand and sixty-nine crores in these five years, for working a number of schemes which are intended to develop the natural resources of the country. These relate to agriculture, community development, irrigation and power, transport and communications, commerce and industry, social services, rehabilitation, and the spread of education. It should be noted that about 44.6 per cent of this money will be spent for the improvement of agriculture and irrigation, and only one hundred and seventy three crores will be available for the development of industries. In other words, it is a scheme with an agricultural bias. This is the right

course to follow in a country, where about seventy per cent of the total population depend on agriculture as their means of livelihood. The idea is that the income of the majority of our people cannot be increased, until the price of food-grains and other agricultural products rise to economic levels. Secondly, agriculture will give bread to the people, who are engaged in arts, crafts, and industries. Moreover, it will supply raw materials for feeding the industries.

The Commission has realized fully that, for the development of agriculture, the country needs improved facilities for irrigation, use of manures and fertilizers, and the supply of better seeds. That is why they have drawn up a number of irrigation projects for watering the cornfields, and producing power for the development of industries. The most important among them are the Damodar Valley Project in Bihar and West Bengal, the Hirakud Dam Project in Orissa, the Tungabhadra Project in South India, and the Bhakra Nangal Project in the Punjab. We are happy to find that most of these projects for controlling and preserving the waters of our great rivers are making good progress and nearing completion. It has also recommended Community Development Schemes for regulating the economic and social life of the people living in the villages. The Commission leaves the development of industries mostly to private enterprise. The government will run a few basic industries, like iron and steel. And our commercial magnates are expected to invest a sum of two hundred and thirty three crores for the development of such industries as petroleum refineries, cement, aluminium, heavy chemicals, medicines, and the like. The government will also help and encourage small cottage industries, specially in the villages, where the people are mostly poor and helpless.

The plan has also in view the development of primary, secondary, and technical education. The Commission hopes that the number of primary schools will increase by 17 p. c., that of secondary schools by 18 p. c., and technical and vocational schools by 57 p. c. Along with all these, the plan recommends increased expenditure on public health, such as the control of malaria, treatment of tuberculosis, and other diseases.

The money required for carrying out this scheme will be raised in various ways. It is expected that the State Governments will be able to raise seven hundred and thirty-eight crores during these five years. The Government of India will collect five hundred and twenty crores by floating public loans, and selling National Savings Certificates. These two sources will bring twelve hundred and fifty-eight crores. The Government have also received financial help from the United States of America, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and the International Bank.

The rest of the money will be raised either by foreign aid, or additional taxation and borrowing. It is hoped that, when the plan is worked out on these lines, the national income of the country will rise by eleven per cent at the end of 1956. But, as the population will also increase during these years, the real income per head will rise by about four per cent, which is all too little.

The Five-Year Plan is a reasonable and well-defined scheme. It has done well by laying special stress on the improvement of agriculture in a country like India. It is an improvement on the Draft Five-Year Plan, but we feel that it has not made ample provision for industrial development, without which no nation can prosper and raise the standard of living. We think that the expansion of industries will go a long way in relieving the sufferings of the masses. However, it is only a modest beginning, and will lead to great things in the fulness of time.

This is the brief outline of the plan as we find it before commencement. It is now for us to see how far it has been crowned with success. It must be conceded that the progress made so far is fairly satisfactory. Both agriculture and industrial production have made good progress. About 17 million acres of land have been brought under irrigation as a result of the River Valley Projects launched by the Government of India—projects which have made much headway by this time.

In the case of food-grains, India has become almost self-sufficient. This presents a bright and hopeful picture as against the famines that, in the past, used to carry away millions of lives from time to time. Moreover, the power-potential of the country has increased vastly.

The actual record of industrial progress is quite gratifying, and much progress has also been made by the railways. During the period several major undertakings went into production, such as Sindri Fertilizer Factory, Chittaranjan Locomotive Works, Coach-building Factory at Perambur, and so on. All of them are working well and increasing their output quickly. But unfortunately there have been short-falls in the expenditure on community projects, education, and village and small industries. However, the national income has increased by 18 p.c. as against the target of 11 p.c.

The over-all picture is satisfactory, though there are some dark shadows. There is still a good deal of unemployment in both urban and rural areas. Moreover, the standard of living is extremely low, and the consumption expenditure of each person in India is about twenty-two rupees per head.

The Government of India have now announced the Second Five-Year Plan. It aims at the increase of national income, raising the standard of living, rapid development of industries, fuller employment, and social justice. The first plan has made good progress and made the people 'planning conscious'. And it is expected that the second one will encourage them to co-operate with the government in this great work for the advancement of India.

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### INFLATION IN INDIA

Inflation is one of those great evils that have brought untold sufferings on the people of India. For long years now, we are feeling what it means. We have to pay four times or even more for things that we need everyday. Inflation is not confined to luxuries alone. It has even pushed up the prices of things that we need for our very living, such as rice, sugar, salt, cloth, and the like. Rice, which was once sold at three rupees a maund, can be had now at seventeen rupees at the lowest. In the same way, we have to pay ten or twelve rupees for a pair of cloths, which could be had for a rupee and a half before the War. This is one of the reasons why five million men, women, and children died during the Great Bengal Famine of 1943. And the vast majority of the people who have outlived this great calamity are living miserably from hand to mouth. Indeed, the people who have been hit the hardest by this man-made famine, are the middle classes, who are the backbone of the nation. They cannot beg from door to door, and have to suffer silently. Many of these men are now ill-clad, half-starved, helpless, and miserable. There has been little or no increase in their earnings, but the prices of foodstuffs and other necessaries of life have shot up like rockets. The question is how this has come to be. To our mind, the reason is not far to seek. During the last Great War, the Government of India purchased vast quantities of military stores for the British Government. The British Government did not pay the price of those things directly. They kept the money as 'Sterling Reserve' to the credit of the Government of India. That is why the Government of India, in those days, issued paper money worth *One thousand seven hundred and forty crores* to pay for these stores. It was expected, at the time, that this deficiency would be made up by the development of war industries in India. But this hope has not been fulfilled. In the result, the purchasing power of the rupee has gone down like anything, and a man has lost about seventy-five per cent of his small income.

There has been no rise in his wages. He receives only a few rupees as 'dearness allowance'. But he has to pay, on an average, four times for each and everything needed in daily life. In a sense, famine stalks the land even now. And there are millions of people, all over the country, who are dying by inches. It may be said confidently that 'inflation' is taking away at least twenty-five years of life from every little child born in India now-a-days. This is sure to happen in a country where a man earning one hundred rupees can purchase goods worth rupees twenty-five only at pre-war level. In a word, inflation is most harmful to the interests of wage-earners as there is always a lag between wages and prices. It may give some impetus to industry for a short time, and give advantage to employers and manufacturers for the time being. But it is a curse to the vast masses of men living in our country.

At the end of the last Great War, some of the most distinguished economists of India applied their minds to this problem. But they failed to stem the tide of inflation for various reasons. There was the rush of refugees from West and East Pakistan, military operations in Kashmir, and the huge expenditure incurred by the government over the River-Valley Projects. These Projects are no doubt intended for the good of India. But, for the first two years at least, they were entrusted to men who knew little about these things and wasted tons of money. It was fondly expected that the cost of administration would come down very considerably when the British left India. But it was only a dream, that will never come true.

During British rule, the cost of administration in undivided India was about seventy-six crores. But today, in divided India, it is more than three hundred and thirty crores, and still mounting. More than half of our sterling balance has been wiped off. We are sending ambassadors to foreign countries, who live in a lordly style with a large retinue of officers and attendants. Mahatma Gandhi himself has condemned this lavish expenditure of money on foreign service, many a time. Moreover, we are maintaining a Governor in each and every province, in a style and at a cost which is simply unthinkable in a poor country like India. All of them are eminent men with a long and distinguished record of public service. But they have no power and no real work to do. Their only duty is to attend social functions and make graceful speeches. They are like actors on the stage, who play their parts for five years, and then fade out of public memory. Indeed, President Rajendra Prasad is sick of it. He has expressed a desire to leave Rashtrapati Bhavan, and take to a quiet life in the countryside.

Again, far from keeping down prices, the Government of India have called upon the cotton mills to cut down the production of *dhuties* and *sarees*, and they have allowed an increase in prices. We are afraid that this is not the way in which we may stem the rising tide of inflation. So, to the common man of India, inflation has been followed by a deep depression of spirits. To him the future is still dark, and no one knows whither he is going. It is also a shame that the great commercial magnates of India have done nothing to keep down inflation. On the other hand, they have taken advantage of the situation to raise the prices of commodities in very possible way, engaged in black-marketing, and evaded taxes to the top of their bent. Indeed, evasion of Sales Tax and Income Tax is one of the greatest scandals of our time. These rich men are always calling upon the government to put an end to rationing and allow the laws of demand and supply to take their course. And indeed the government had de-controlled cloth some years ago. They did it from the purest of motives. But the result was that large stocks of cloth went underground, prices rose higher and higher, and the owners of mills piled one hundred crores of rupees by black-marketing. Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru declared that these men should be hanged by the nearest lamp-posts. But, far from being hanged, they are living in pomp and splendour as before, and building palaces and pleasure-gardens of their own. Indeed, the whole country has been so thoroughly demoralized that rationing should continue for many years more, under the direction of men who can be relied on for their honesty, integrity, and humanity. However, rationing has now been virtually abolished all over the country by order of the government of India. This has been followed almost immediately by an abnormal rise in the price of sugar. And the Government of India have been compelled to adopt stern measures for the control of the situation.

The question is how we shall be able to get rid of these evils. Our economists have suggested various ways and means for the solution of the problem. In the first place, they have called upon the people of India to step up the production of consumers' goods by all means. As the Prime Minister has told us, that 'produce or perish' should be the slogan of every worker in India. The future of India lies in the rapid development of industries and agriculture on scientific lines. The Five-Year Plan is a step forward in the right direction. And we are glad to find that the government of India have announced a Second Five-Year Plan, which will raise the national income and do social justice. If the river valley projects are carried on vigorously, they will irrigate vast areas of waste lands and generate power for the working of industries. They will make India a land of peace and plenty. Attempts should also be made to reduce the cost of

administration and bring it down to pre-war level. The Government should at once draw up a new scale of salaries for public servants. We are, of course, bound to honour the pledges given to those who are already in the service of the government. But this should not affect the scale of pay and prospects for new entrants to government service. There is also absolutely no reason why dearness allowance should be paid to government officers, drawing five hundred rupees or more. Commutation of pensions of retired government servants should be discontinued, as it is a huge drain on public revenue. The posts of provincial Governors, Commissioners of Divisions, and the like, should be abolished. And lastly, the cost of ambassadors' establishments should be reduced to the minimum. Pakistan spends very little on her ambassadors, and yet their powerful propaganda has swept all Europe and America. Our ambassadors live in a princely style, but they are almost always silent when the affairs of our country require vigorous publicity. We should also encourage the import of things which are selling at very high prices in India, minimize expenditure, and make savings. This will help the poor men, who want to live and let live. Lastly, we must reform public morals through education social reform, and the spread of liberal ideas. This will help us to conquer all evils and teach us to place the interests of our country above everything else.

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### COTTAGE INDUSTRY

India is mainly an agricultural country. That is why the number of great organized industries in this country is very small. We have many industries no doubt, but most of them are worked on a small scale. Cottage industries do not require much capital and they can be carried on in the homes of the artisans as a family occupation.

We are told that cottage industries employ about twenty million people in India. There are also a large number of agriculturists who are engaged in some form of cottage industry, when they are away from the cornfields for about nine months in the year. India was once famous for her cottage industries, and her fine saris, shawls, and other beautiful works of art were prized all over the world. We read in history that they were much valued in the courts of the Moghul Emperors of India. Some of them were also in great favour in the courts of the Emperors of Rome.

But all this was changed when the British came to rule over India. The articles of luxury made in India could not compete with the machine-made goods of England. Those things were much cheaper, and gradually replaced the small cottage industries of this country.

The most popular cottage industry of ancient India was hand-spinning. But it could not stand the competition of machine-made cloths. It was Mahatma Gandhi who gave a new lease of life to this dying industry. He preached to men and women all over India the cult of the *Charka*. It is no doubt impossible to solve the cloth problem of India with the help of the *Charka*. Yet, it gives some relief to the poor cultivator and his family, when they sit idle for many months in the year. It enables them to meet at least a part of their requirements in cloth.

But the most important cottage industry of India today is the handloom industry. It produces more than one fourth of the cotton piece-goods of India. A little over sixty lacs of people are employed in this industry, and it turns out goods worth about fifty crores a year. It is carried on all over the country. Nadia, Santipur, Dhanekhali, Chandernagar, Autpur, and Rajbalhat in Hooghly in West Bengal are well-known for their handloom saris and cloths. In Assam cotton goods are generally produced by the weavers of Surma Valley. The value of cotton goods produced by this industry in West Bengal is worth about three and a half crores. But these industries cannot stand the competition of cotton mills, both Indian and foreign. They are in a most deplorable condition in these days of high prices and keen competition. That is why the Government of India have, of late, passed a bill by which all the mills have been called upon to restrict the production of dhotis and saris to sixty per cent of their present turnover. Whether this will help handloom industry or increase the sufferings of the poor people is a matter of opinion. The price at which handloom cloths are sold in the market is far above the reach of the common buyer. Possibly this is due to the activities of the middlemen who grab the lion's share of the profit in every industry.

Yet, we have very good reasons to hope that the handloom industry will never die out. The weaver is a very skilful artisan, who can manage his business with a small capital. Secondly, he is helped by all the members of his family, specially women and children. So, he can produce things at a cost which is very low. Moreover, he can carry on his work of weaving, along with agriculture. He turns out fine cloths of various patterns and, in this respect, the mills cannot compete with him. Even the coarse stuff made by him is preferred by people living in the villages, as it is more lasting than mill-made cloth.

Silk-weaving is another cottage industry which is carried on in all parts of the country. But the most important centres of production are Bombay, Madras, Mysore, West Bengal, United Provinces, and Assam. In West Bengal, Murshidabad is famous for its silk industry. And allied to this is *sericulture*, which includes the rearing of silk worms and spinning. It is a very important cottage industry in Mysore, Kashmir, Assam Valley, and Murshidabad, Maldah, and Birbhum in West Bengal. These industries are next, in point of importance, to the cotton hand-loom industry.

Then we come to wool industry. It produces many artistic goods like shawls and carpets, but it is now in a dying condition. It is centred mainly in Kashmir, Kanpur, and Mirzapur. It also supplies large quantities of rough blankets for the use of the common people.

There are also many smaller cottage industries all over the country. The bell-metal industry of Banaras, Moradabad, Sri-nagar, and Murshidabad in West Bengal are well known throughout India. The pottery industry of Krishnanagar and the bangle-making industry of the United Provinces are also warmly admired and patronized in every part of India. There are, again, other industries like *bidi*-making, rice-pounding, oil-pressing, sweetmeat-making, basket-making, matting, rope-making, cane and bamboo-work, and the like.

About eight per cent of the total number of labourers in our country are engaged in these industries, which can be run with a small capital and a few helping hands. It can give employment to a large number of men and women who have to sit idle for many months between the sowing and reaping of corn. These industries are of great help to the vast masses of poor people in India. But they have not been able to make much progress for various reasons. They still depend on the old modes of production. The artisans use crude implements and are mostly poor and illiterate. They have no money to buy raw materials and cannot hold their stocks, to sell them at a fair price. So, they run into debt and fall into the grip of the money-lenders.

All these difficulties can be removed if the government come to their help. They can help these people with new and up-to-date implements. They may sell implements to the artisans at a cheap cost, to be paid in easy instalments. They can start co-operative credit societies and grant small loans to these people. Sales-rooms and museums should be started in all important cities and even in foreign countries to advertise the quality of our cottage industries and push up their sale. And there should also be a central sales agency like the All-India Village Industries Association. Moreover, they should open shops and induce

these men to produce goods suited to modern tastes and style of living. Finally, these men should be educated and supplied with cheap power to carry on their industries. We should remember that watch-making is a cottage industry in Switzerland.

The question is whether these cottage industries will be able to hold their own in an age of machinery. We are sure that, in every age, there will be men and women with refined tastes. Fashionable young men and women will like to wear fine dhoties, silk panjabis, and beautiful Kashmiri shawls in every age. Young ladies will always wear fine Banarasi sarees, ornaments, and the like. These are things which can only be supplied by cottage industries. But the vast majority of our people must have cheap, mill-made, finished goods. The starting of a large number of mills, factories, and other industrial works will give employment to millions of men and women. They will also produce pumps, tractors, and fertilizers which will be needed for the improvement of agriculture. Indeed, no nation on earth will ever be able to prosper without the development of large-scale industries.

Indeed, big industries like steel, iron, and the like, must be supplemented by cottage industries. It is true that cottage industries can never die. But they must be helped, encouraged, and given a new life with the help of science. This should be the ideal of industry in India, as in other civilized countries of the world. The cry is often heard that we must go back to the village and live in the past. It is a false cry. We should aim at a harmonious blending of all the good things of the past and the present.

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### PROBLEM OF COTTAGE INDUSTRIES IN AN AGE OF MACHINERY

We are living in an age of machinery. Most of the things used by us in daily life are produced on a large scale with the help of machinery. Here in India, the cotton mills of Bombay and Ahmedabad, the jute mills of Bengal, Tata Iron and Steel Works, and the great Locomotive Factory at Chittaranjan tell us that we are living in an age of machinery. This is also brought home to us as we listen to the radio, speak with our friends on the 'phone, and hear the songs of musicians or speeches of great men through the microphone. Indeed, we feel, at times, that the age of noble eloquence is gone, and the age of microphones has come to stay. 'Speed' is the watchword of our industrial activities in modern times. We are tired of a long railway

journey and think of flying from Calcutta to Delhi in a few hours, in defiance of all perils.

The question arises as to whether there is any scope for cottage industries in these days of hectic speed, when every moment is precious and may not be wasted. That is why the vast majority of our people like to have finished goods at a cheaper price. Let us take the case of cloth. Our mills can produce very fine *dhoties* and sell them at a cost which is much lower than that of the products of weaving. With our growing population and rapidly advancing civilization, we require more clothes. It is beyond the power of handlooms to meet the growing needs of the people. Similarly, jute is pressed by machines and turned into gunny bags that are in great demand all over the world. Indeed, jute is called the 'golden fibre', which gives bread to millions of people in our land. The same thing may be said of paper, pencils, printed books, and almost everything we need everyday in life.

There have been great savants and thinkers in India, who are in favour of going back to the golden age of old. They feel that India should be free from the evil influences of modern civilization. Mahatma Gandhi was one of these great idealists. He called upon the people of this country to give up mill-made cloth and wear divine *khaddar*. It was, at his will, that the Congress adopted *khaddar* as the official dress of its members. And the Mahatma held up before the people the *charka* or the spinning wheel as the symbol of the great Indian Nation. It was he who virtually founded the All India Spinners' Association, that made *khaddar* highly popular from end to end of the country. True to their loyalty to the Mahatma, the National Government of India have been making vigorous efforts to revive *khaddar*. The Mahatma hoped that each and every Indian would spin his own cloth, and so there would be no need of textile mills anywhere in the country. This is the short and simple way in which he strove to solve the cloth problem of this vast sub-continent. Moreover, he thought that the mills and factories were breeders of drinking, immorality, and many other vices. He was, therefore, dreaming of the great and glorious days of the past, when India was the home of peace, happiness, innocence, and simplicity.

But like all great men he was a dreamer of dreams. He had come an age too late, and could not realize that the times are changing, and much water has flown down the Indian Ocean, since the days of the great *rishis* of old. It is now known to all that no nation can survive without the rapid development of trade, commerce, and industries. That is why the Government of India have made the Five-Year Plan, and they are working, with hectic speed, to carry it out and extend its scope still

further. And they have now announced the Second Five-Year Plan, which will raise the national income, develop industries, and do social justice. Today, many of our requirements can be met with goods made in India. And even the food problem of the vast millions of India can never be solved without the development of agriculture on scientific lines. Here, again, the industries must come to the aid of agriculture by producing tractors, pumps, fertilizers, and many other implements for tilling and renewing soil, reaping corn, threshing, cleaning, and the like.

So, the question may arise whether there is any room for the development of cottage industries in this age of machinery. Our answer is that there is ample scope for these small industries in India—industries that can be carried on at home with simple tools and without the help of electric power. Indeed, these things are sorely needed in a poor country like India, where most of the people have to depend on agriculture for a living. We are told that there are about ninety million people in India who sit idle for the better part of the year, as there are long months of waiting between sowing and reaping. All these men gwell the ranks of the half-starved and discontented people, whose number is legion. To our mind, these vast masses of people can be profitably engaged in cottage industries, which can be greatly developed with help from the Government.

There was a time when Indian textiles were in great demand in the markets of the world and Indian muslin and silk were liked, not only by the Moghul Emperors at Delhi, but also in Egypt and Rome. Even today cottage industries meet about thirty per cent of the clothes used in India. Silk is one of the most flourishing cottage industries of India. The brocades and silk fabrics of Murshidabad and Banaras, *Tasar* of West Bengal and *endi* and *muga* of Assam, are highly appreciated and admired, not only in India but also in Europe and America. Kashmiri shawls are famous for their fine fabrics and artistic design. Again, embroidery, dyeing, and printing of sarees, table-cloth, screens, and many other things, are some of the most famous cottage industries of India. The bell-metal industry of Berhampore and Banaras is also a very important cottage industry of India. But this not all. The poorer people of the country, like the Santhals and many hill tribes, make baskets, screens, sieves, nets, and the like from cane and bamboo. They also make boxes, tables, chairs, and book-cases out of these common things. There is, moreover, ample scope for cottage industry in carpentry, shoe-making, smithy, and enamelling work. If we look at the Chinese colony in Calcutta, we shall see how these people are earning plenty of money with their excellent wood-works and their wonderful skill in shoe-making. They are a most happy and contented people who never go about begging for

bread. The pottery works of Krishnanagar, the sporting goods of Sialkot in the Punjab, musical instruments, and glasswares have made much progress now-a-days. Many kinds of scents, soaps, chemicals, and medicines are now made in India. There are also men in the villages who make a living by oil-pressing and tanning. But, as they stand at present, these industries cannot meet the needs of the whole country, or bring food to the home of each and every unemployed man and woman of India. We must develop these industries much further, with help from the government, and with our own energy, diligence, and perseverance. We should take lessons from the great toy industry of Japan and the famous watch-making industry of Switzerland. They are now the wonder and admiration of all the world, and have brought peace and plenty to many a home in these countries. And we should remember that these countries have also worked wonders with their machinery. Japan has developed a great steel industry. She has her own shipping, railway engines, motor cars, printing machines, aeroplanes, textile mills, and indeed each and everything needed in a highly civilized, progressive, and warlike country. It is the same story with Germany. German scientists and engineers have made her a great power, and a home of many famous industries. The Iron Works of Krupps and their steel products have startled all the world. Yet, these countries have always encouraged cottage industries, that enable many of their men and women to earn their bread by living a quiet life at home. It is, therefore, clear that there is ample scope for the development of cottage industries in an age of machinery. This is specially so in India, where the mills, factories, and workshops must work in full swing, side by side with cottage industries. It is this that will bring peace, plenty, and prosperity to the teeming millions of our beloved motherland.

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### AGRICULTURE AND INDUSTRIES

India is mainly an agricultural country. From ancient times, the people of this country have earned their bread in the sweat of their brow. They have raised crops by tilling the fields and lived on them. In days long gone by, the population of the country was much smaller than it is now. And her rivers, streams, and channels were not obstructed by railways. That is why no Indian had ever to think of his means of livelihood. This is the happy spirit in which Bankimchandra sings of Bengal as a land of fruits, flowers, rivers, streams, and smiling cornfields. And many eminent

men have told us that India should look to agriculture for her wealth and well-being. They think that the curse of modern India is the craze for industrialism. They point to the evils of industrialism, the greed of the capitalists, and the sweated labour of the humble workers in mills and factories. They speak of the glaring inequality of human conditions in our country, where a small minority of capitalists and merchant princes are rolling in wealth and luxury in the midst of teeming millions of poor, helpless, and miserable men and women. Mahatma Gandhi has called upon the people of this country to go back to the villages and take to the plough and the spinning wheel. Our poets have described vividly the peace, plenty, and contentment of the men and women living in the villages. The only industries that the Mahatma has recommended for the vast masses of men and women are cottage industries. He has told them to look upon the spinning wheel as the symbol of freedom and prosperity. He has always condemned the spread of mills, factories, and iron works from one end of the country to the other. It is for this reason that the Congress Government of India organizes, from time to time, *Vanamahotsab* or the grand festival of planting seedlings. We also hear of ritual spinning in Government House on solemn occasions, like the birth and death anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, Independence Day, and so on. But the progress and development of a country can never be possible without a happy blending of education, agriculture, and industries.

Indeed, there is no conflict between agriculture and industries, just as there is no conflict between science and religion. If we think deeply over the problems of life, we shall find that the peace, prosperity, and contentment of the vast masses of men in every land depend on the harnessing of all our energies to arts, industries, agriculture, engineering, and the like. If the Indian peasant desires to produce the food he needs, he must make the best use of the plot of land that belongs to him. But this will not help him much. He must combine with others to cultivate large tracts of land. The best thing is for all the people of a village to combine and cultivate land on a co-operative basis. If this process of farming is taken up in one village, it will be followed by others. And then, in course of time, vast areas of land may be cultivated with help from the State. Mahatma Gandhi told the people of our country, again and again, to take to cottage industries. Cottage industries are of great help to the poor people. They can spin cloth, grind wheat, or press oil out of mustard seed. They can make toys for the children and plates or pots of clay. They can even make paper, soap, and the like for ordinary use. In Switzerland, watch-making is a highly developed cottage industry. In our country, clothes of the finest quality like Kashmiri shawls, Banarasi saris, and Dacca muslins

are the gift of cottage industries. But cottage industry is not enough to meet the needs of the whole population—to give food and clothing to one and all. So, we must have mills, factories, Iron Works, Dockyards, Railway Workshops, Power Houses, and indeed all that is needed for removing the curse of poverty and giving health and happiness to our people. In these days of scramble for power among the great nations of the world, we must also develop war industries, such as the making of aeroplanes, radios, arms and ammunitions. This is an age of science and keen competition among the nations of the world. We must keep pace with the march of time, and try to reach the highest level of excellence in agriculture and industries.

The changing world has induced the Government of India to deflect from the Gandhian ideal of national economy. This is clearly revealed in their Five-Year Plan. It is a plan which aims at the fullest development of agriculture and industries on scientific lines. That is why the Government are now working out a number of River Valley Projects for storing rain-water in huge dams, and using it for irrigating waste lands and generating electric power. Among them is the Damodar Valley Project for West Bengal and Bihar. It has made much progress during these years. The great Tilaya Dam and Bokhara Thermal Power Station are already in action. Since then the great Canada Dam at Masanjore, and The Durgapur Barrage have been completed. They will be able to water vast areas of land in Bengal and Bihar and bring food to the hungry millions of our country. And at the same time, they will supply power for the development of industries. Moreover, we must have tractors, fertilizers, and manure for getting the best results in agriculture. And all these are made in factories. The Sindri Fertilizer Factory is now working in full swing to help the development of agriculture.

The Government have also established the Railway Workshops at Chittaranjan for making locomotives in India. They have entered into agreements with foreign firms to produce synthetic petrol at Bombay, and set up a steel plant at Ruirkella in Orissa. The Government of India have just signed an agreement with Russia for the construction of a huge steel plant at Bhilai in Madhya Pradesh. They know that petrol is the life-blood of automobiles, airways, and waterways. In modern times the quick movement of men and goods from one place to another is of the highest importance to agriculture and industries as well. There are motor cars, lorries, and trucks running on our roadways, that feed the railways in many areas. There are also motor launches that ply in our canals and rivers for carrying goods and passengers. And we require steel for the making of engines, coaches, and wagons for our railways, and building work. All

these are needed for the good of our country. Indeed, the peace and prosperity of India depend on the development of agriculture and industry, side by side. There is no conflict between the two, and one cannot grow without the other. They are the two main currents of national life.

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### AGRICULTURE AND ITS PROBLEMS

India is an agricultural country, and vast millions of her people live on the land. But it is a pity that, in spite of our best efforts, we have not yet been able to bring peace and plenty to the land. Ours is a fertile country, watered by many rivers and streams. Yet, we have to import, year after year, large quantities of food-grains from foreign countries at very high prices. This is due, not to the quality of the lands tilled by our farmers, but to many other causes.

In the first place, most of our people own small plots of land. These they till by themselves, but the corn they reap cannot meet the needs of the family for the better part of the year. A peasant in our country may carry on for a few months, after which he borrows money from the village landlord and runs into debt. He cannot pay off his debt from his small earnings and, in a few years, his holding is sold and he becomes a pauper. This is one of the most glaring defects of agriculture in our country. It is the duty of the State to make laws to prevent this splitting up of land, which is called 'fragmentation of holdings'. And it should encourage, by all means in its power, large-scale farming. If the inhabitants of a group of villages combine and cultivate large tracts of land, they will be able to reap much more corn at a cheaper cost. They can also sell their crops at a higher price.

Moreover, they should be helped to learn the use of manure and scientific methods of cultivation. The majority of these men do not know the use of manures, many of which are always ready at hand. Over and above these, the State should supply them with good seeds and fertilizers. The Sindri Fertilizer Factory, run by the government, is the result of a move in the right direction. It will be able to supply large quantities of ammonium sulphate at a cheap cost, and help the cultivator in improving the quality and quantity of his crops. It is also the duty of the State to help the people of remote villages to dig tanks, make roads, and sink deep tube-wells, so that they may water their fields in times

of drought, and carry their crops to markets for sale. And they should be supplied with tractors that will enable them to till the soil much more easily and at a quicker pace. This will also increase the yield of crops vastly and bring a better return to the peasant for all his toil and trouble. But, for the success of all these measures, lands should be cultivated on a large scale and the crops distributed among the peasants, according to their shares therein. In a word, land will have to be cultivated in large plots on a co-operative basis.

All this will go a long way in improving the condition of agriculture in our country. But we shall yet be far behind other countries in solving the problems of food and clothing. We are told that, in Japan, each plot of land yields four times the quantity of corn we reap in an equal area here in India.

Placed as we are, we have to depend on the mercy of the monsoon for all these things. If the monsoon fails in any part of the country, there is a famine, and thousands of men and women die for want of food. We may remember the great Bengal Famine of 1943, when the streets of Calcutta were littered with the dead and the dying, and about five million men, women, and children perished in hunger. There is also the problem of floods. During heavy rains many of our big rivers, like the Ganges, the Padma, the Brahmaputra, the Indus, or the Godavari burst their banks and sweep over fields, deluging and destroying the corn growing in them. Once again, there is famine, followed by the outbreak of dangerous and deadly diseases.

To prevent all this, we must have reservoirs for storing water all over the country, irrigation canals for watering the cornfields, and powerful electric pumps for draining flood-water. The huge Tilaya Dam and Bokhara Thermal Power House are encouraging signs of the times. They have held out high hopes for the development of agriculture, and contributed much to the success of the First Five Year Plan. The Bhakra Nangal Project has now completed its first stage amid the rejoicings of the nation. It will, in a few years, irrigate thirty-six million acres of land, and supply four hundred thousand kilowatts of electricity to help industries and agriculture.

It is clear that, for the advancement of agriculture, we must have not only irrigation canals but also cheap electricity. In a word, agriculture must be supplemented by the labours of scientists. In America, vast stretches of sandy wastes are irrigated by water carried from rivers, hundreds of miles away. Today they abound in fruits, flowers, and vegetables, that are valued all over the world. This is how irrigation, helped by science, has turned dreary deserts into lands flowing with milk and honey.

There are great men who think that the people of India should devote all their time and energy to agriculture. They should not try to build up industries, which will do more harm than good to the poor people of this country. Mahatma Gandhi is one of them. Time and again, he has called upon our men and women to turn to the plough and the spinning wheel. 'Back to the village' was his slogan all through the crowded years of his life.

But we must observe, in all humility, that the 'old order changeth yielding place to the new.' No nation in the modern world can prosper without industries. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has told us rightly that we must produce or perish. We should realize that even agriculture cannot flourish without industries. Our peasants till their lands for a season or two. The rest of the time, about nine months in the year, they sit idle and run into debt.

We can give bread and work to these people, if we have flourishing industries all over the land. We require fertilizers, pumps, tractors, and electric power for the improvement of our agriculture. Where shall we have them, without the help of industries? That is why agriculture must be supplemented by trade, commerce, and industries, if we are to bring peace, happiness, and prosperity to the people of India.

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### LABOUR AND LABOUR WELFARE IN INDIA

We live in an age of industries. No nation on earth can ever prosper without the development of industries. And for this we require not only capital and machinery, but also honest and efficient labour. The machines are there, but we must have labourers who will work the machines. Indeed, they are the very backbone of industry, the real pulse of the machine. It is, therefore, the sacred duty of the capitalists and owners of industries to look after the welfare of the labourers in their employ.

But for a long, long time in the past, the capitalists were trying to make money at the cost of the poor men and women who worked for long hours in the mills, factories, and mines. They never cared for the health and well-being of the poor workers. And they did not try to give any education to the children of the labourers working under them. The result was that labourers had to work, from daybreak to the late hours of the evening, under the most unhealthy and inhuman conditions.

Many of them died early, and the vast majority of these people lived miserably in hunger, poverty, and dirt. Their sufferings moved the hearts of some noble and high-souled men in every land. In England eminent thinkers and writers like Carlyle and Ruskin raised their voice of protest against this state of things, and pleaded for love and charity in dealing with the problem of labour. This feeling is echoed in every line of Hood's 'Song of the Shirt' and Elizabeth Barrett Browning's 'The Cry of the Poor Children.'

It was a long time before the Government lifted its little finger. It passed several acts for the reform of labour. The spirit of reform reached our country in course of time, and in 1881, the Government of India passed the first Factory Act. But it was a very modest act of reform. The condition of the labourers in our country in the tea-gardens and indigo plantations was as miserable as ever. These people were not treated like men. They were looked down upon as beasts of burden. The sufferings of the labourers on indigo plantations were vividly described by Dinabandhu Mitra in his famous drama, *Nil Darpan*. And the untiring efforts of a band of noble and patriotic workers, headed by Dwarakanath Ganguli, brought to light the unbearable sufferings of the labourers in the tea-gardens. It was they who gave out how men, women, and even children were duped to leave their homes and forced to work on low wages, that did not allow of one full meal a day. Indeed, they preached loudly that to drink tea was to drink the blood of the coolies in the tea-gardens. That is why there were very few people of India, in the last generation, who used to take tea. Things have now improved a good deal. Yet, we are far, far away from the ideal, which should lead the employer of labour in every civilized country.

The agitation for improving the condition of labour has been carried on by the Indian National Congress from age to age. It is also the slogan of every political organization in India now-a-days. The problems of labour are very simple. In the first place, it is the duty of the state to improve the condition of the workers in the mills, factories, mines, dockyards, and elsewhere. Secondly, the scale of wages should be raised, so that the labourers may live clean, healthy, and contented lives. Formerly, the labourers had to work from the morning till the late hours of the evening amid dirt, smoke, and the roar of the machines. Those who worked in the mines were shut in dark dungeons, where they were almost choked to death for want of pure air. There was hardly any arrangement for pure drinking water or medical aid when any one was injured in working on the machines. There were no leave rules, and even women

and children were forced to work for long hours. There were not even hospitals for the sick, and schools for the education of the little children of the workers.

'Labour movements were started all over the country and Labour Unions were formed. At first the employers tried to suppress these Labour Unions, and punished the workers who joined them. But by the Trade Union Act of 1926, such unions will be recognized as lawful, if they are registered. This Act was moved by Mr. N.M. Joshi, who has been always regarded as the father of trade unionism in India. The right to form unions and go on strike has been recognized by this Act. Since then many other improvements have been brought about. By the Factories Act of 1948, rules have been laid down for the protection of the workers against accidents. It has also forbidden the employment of women and children in running certain types of machines. Moreover, it has provided for the employment of a Welfare Officer in every place where more than five hundred labourers are working. It also requires the owners of mills, factories, or other works to open canteens where the number of workers is two thousand five hundred or more. The hours of work for each labourer have been limited to forty-eight a week. It has also prohibited the employment of boys below the age of fourteen, and provided for one day's leave for every twenty days' work. Again, the Minimum Wages Act of 1948 has empowered the government to fix minimum wages of labourers. And the Government have done so for certain occupations in some places, such as agricultural labour, workers in rice mills, and so on. It has, to a large extent, restrained the capitalists from exploiting labour. Moreover, the Workmen's Compensation Act, the Maternity Benefit Act, the Payment of Wages Act, and the Indian Mines Act have greatly improved the condition of labour in our times.

But this is not all. The Government of India have found it desirable to settle disputes between capital and labour with the help of joint conciliation boards. That is why they have set up Workers' Committees on which the labourers and capitalists are equally represented. The Industrial Disputes Act of 1947 enables labour and capital to place all their disputes before a tribunal when conciliation has failed. All these measures have been taken to remove discontent and prevent strikes. And laws have also been made for giving better service conditions to shop-workers and assistants.

Like all other civilized countries of the world, India has advanced, all along the line, in improving the condition of labour. Today the labourer in India enjoys rights, privileges, and amenities which he could not even dream of a quarter of

a century ago. This is due to the keen and lively interest taken by the people of India in the problem of Labour and Labour Welfare. It must be conceded that there is yet much to be done. There should be better, cheaper, and cleaner houses for these poor people to live in. Their children should be educated in schools set up in every labour area. They should also be taught to look upon themselves as citizens of India, and give up evil habits like drinking, quarrelling, and the like. The First Five Year Plan recommended that all boys and girls between six and fourteen should be given free and compulsory primary education. If this scheme is fully carried out, the labourers will enjoy its blessings like all other people.

Lastly, our labour leaders should teach these people not only to agitate for rights and privileges, but also to realize that they must do their duty to earn these blessings. In England and other countries, labourers go on strike at very rare and long intervals. They strike after giving notice, when all other means have failed. Yet, they go on working honestly and efficiently up to the zero hour. But here in India, there is slowing down of work, long before the strike comes into effect. Even when the strike is settled, labourers are found unwilling to do their work regularly. We may look at the Posts and Telegraphs Department to see how it has been demoralized after the last General Strike. Once upon a time, it was the most diligent, regular, and efficient service in India. Today it has become hopelessly irregular and inefficient. A letter posted in Calcutta will, at times, reach its destination in a week. The same thing has happened with the railways, and punctuality is now the exception rather than the rule. Indeed, the labour leaders of our country are, more often than not, deeply influenced by political motives. They care more for their parties than for the welfare of labour. They are out to create discontent and give trouble to their political rivals. This is the bane of party politics in India. It is, therefore, the clear duty of every citizen of India to work for the welfare of our labourers in the mills, factories, mines, and indeed in every sphere of work. We should teach these poor and helpless men, not only to cry for their rights and liberties but also to do their duties, first of all. They should remember that they must carry on their noble work for the good of Mother India.

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## FAMINES IN INDIA

Famines break out when there is failure of crops over a vast area. It is due to various causes, such as scanty rainfall, heavy floods, cyclones, or the destruction of crops by locusts and other deadly pests. In days long gone by, famines were due to these natural causes. If one part of the country was visited by famine, the people living there died in millions. All the provinces of India were not linked by railways, steamer services, or a network of roads. Now-a-days, if there be famine in one part of India, food may be rushed from some other province which has reaped a bumper harvest. It can also be imported from abroad. But things were very different in the past. That is why, in the year 1176 B.S., there broke out a terrible famine in Bengal. We read, with a thrill of horror that, in those dark days, men, women and children lived on roots, and even leaves of trees, so long as they could. About five millions of them died in hunger, poverty, and misery. The Great Bengal Famine of 1943 is still fresh in our memory. It was due to many causes. These were the Denial Policy of the British Government during the Second World War, reckless procurement of food-grains by the government for feeding the armed forces, and also the havoc caused by cyclone and flood in the districts of Midnapur, Barisal, 24 Parganas, and Dinajpore. And these are great rice-producing districts. Moreover, almost the whole of Burma was occupied by the Japanese, and all imports from that neighbouring country were stopped. Before the War, about twenty per cent of the people of this country lived on rice that was imported from Burma. Things became still worse when, by orders of Sir John Herbert, the then Governor of Bengal, the Denial Policy of the government was carried on recklessly. Large stocks of rice were removed from this border province, lest they should fall into the hands of the enemy. Country boats were also destroyed in hundreds and thousands, and this made it still more difficult to carry foodstuffs from one place to another. So, the import and production of rice fell heavily, and the demand for rice increased owing to hoarding and blackmarketing. The big commercial firms also began to purchase large quantities of rice for their labourers. All these pushed up the price of rice like anything. It was reported that, in some places, the price of rice rose to one hundred rupees per maund. For many months the magnitude of this disaster was concealed from the people of India and the world outside. One of the high officials of the government went so far as to declare that the picture of the famine had been over-dramatized. Thanks to the vigorous campaign of 'The Statesman', the late Dr. Syamaprasad Mookerjea, and Pandit Hridayanath Kunzru, many lives were saved. The leaders of the Congress were in jail, and

their camp-followers did little or nothing to relieve the sufferings of the people. It was the untiring efforts of 'The Statesman', Dr. Syamaprasad, and Dr. Kunzru that induced the Government of India to move, and charities began to flow in from all parts of the country. Hundreds and thousands of young men rose at their call and worked, day and night, to bring food and relief to the doors of the poor and the suffering. A committee presided over by Sir John Woodhead estimated that the number of men, women, and children who died during the great famine, must have been at least one million and a half. The streets of Calcutta were littered with dead bodies from day to day, and the shrieks of the dying rent the sky. Yet, facts and figures collected by independent sources place the number of the dead at five million. It was a man-made famine. The miseries caused by the failure of crops in Bengal could have been largely averted, if foodgrains had been rushed from one end of the country to the other, or imported in large quantities from abroad. It was not want of food but want of money which cost Bengal five million souls. Some time ago, there was a food-riot in Cooch-Behar where the price of rice rose to seventy rupees per maund and led to serious disturbances. There is acute distress even now in Sunderbans area.

Let us now see what are the ways in which this monster may be quelled. In the first place, we require plenty of rain in every area. It is well known that forests attract rain. But we are clearing jungles and cutting down the trees, right and left. This should be stopped, and trees should be planted in large numbers, all over the land. This is known as afforestation. The Congress has started what is known as *Banamahotsab*, or the planting of saplings. If it is carried on in the right spirit, and not as a fashion, it will do great good to the country. There should be a large number of irrigation canals to bring water to the cornfields, when the rainfall is scanty. The government should also sink deep tube-wells in and around the villages for the supply of good drinking water and fertilizing the fields. Every effort should be made to remove the awful poverty of the masses, as the famine of today is a famine of money. This can be done by the rapid development of industries, big and small, along with agriculture. We should remember that seventy per cent of our people live on agriculture. These vast millions of men sit idle for about nine months in the year and run into debt. Their sufferings become unbearable when there is a failure of crops due to flood or famine. But many of these men can be absorbed in gainful occupations, if India has a network of industries. And many of them may take to cottage industries, such as weaving, spinning, carpentry, and the like. In times of famine, the government should suspend the paying of rents,

and start test works on a large scale. Many of those who are affected by famine may dig irrigation canals, raise embankments, make roads, and sink tube-wells. Again, those who are in need of immediate relief may be given food, clothing, and housing loans.

The government of our country has started a famine insurance fund. Every year a certain amount of money is set aside from the general revenues, and allotted to this fund. This sum is spent in irrigation works, improvement of agriculture, and relief operations.

But we should bear in mind that no government can succeed in resisting this evil without the help, sympathy, and hard and honest labour of the people themselves. We must, one and all, put our shoulders to the wheel to solve this great problem. We should try to grow more food, so that not a man in the country may starve and die. We must have a good plan for raising crops. The River Valley Projects, started by the government, will help us a good deal. But merely watering the cornfields will not carry us very far. We should have good seeds, fertilizers, and tractors. And we must try our best to combine small holdings, and cultivate crops on a scientific basis. This will decrease the cost and increase the quantity and quality of the crops. And the profit made by their sale in the market may be shared by the owners of lands. In a word, the curse of poverty must be wiped off at any cost. We must attack this enemy on all fronts, with all the resources at our command—education, sanitation, irrigation, industries and, above all, our labour, energy, will, and determination.

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### THE PARTITION OF INDIA

The most startling event in the history of modern India is the division of the country into two independent states—India and Pakistan. This was the effect of long years of conflict and repeated negotiations between the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League. During all these years of tension, the officials of the British Government in India were pulling the strings from behind. Their policy was to divide and rule, and create the bitterest feelings of enmity between the Hindus and the Muslims. Not content with this, they broke up even the unity of the great Hindu community by creating 'Scheduled Castes'. These castes were made up of men who belonged to what is known as the depressed classes—classes of men and women who are regarded by the Hindus as untouchables. But they took care to exclude,

from this favoured community those sections of the depressed classes that had taken a leading part in the battle of India's freedom. Such were the *Mahisayya*s who live in large numbers in the districts of Midnapur and 24 Parganas. Moreover, the British had set up semi-independent native princes in the different parts of India, north, south, east, and west. These were feudal despots, who ruled over their states with an iron hand, and allied themselves with the agents of the British Government in curbing the rights, liberties, and aspirations of the people living in their states. In this noble work of firmly establishing their rule over our country, the British Government was aided by the European community in India. They were mostly princely merchants who were out to exploit the people of this country. It was the unholy alliance of all these men that brought about the division of India. We must concede that the Labour Government in England sincerely desired to give freedom to India. This was because they found that it was most unpleasant and unprofitable to rule a people by force in these troublous times. The common man in England has nothing to gain by keeping up a vast empire. He does not care for the pomp and splendour of power. To him the friendship of the vast millions of India is more welcome—a friendship that is sure to improve trade relations between the two countries, and give bread to millions of workers. The Labour Government was also deeply impressed by the organization of the Indian National Army under the leadership of Subhas Chandra Bose, and its powerful influence over the army, the navy, and the air forces of the country. That was why they wisely decided to give freedom to India, in spite of the loud protests of Winston Churchill and his satellites in both the houses of parliament. When the agents of the British Government and the mercantile community found that independence was in the offing, they induced the Labour Government to bring about the division of the country on the basis of religion. This was how the partition of India was announced on June 5, 1947, and carried into effect on the 15th of August of the same year. This was, to our mind, the parting kick of the British Government, which robbed a great gift of its grace and goodwill. If the British Government had given freedom to a united and undivided India, they would have done a golden deed, which would shine in the pages of history through the ages. But they were duped and misled by a band of ex-governors, sun-dried bureaucrats, and unscrupulous European merchants. There were also so-called nationalist leaders who were eager to win power without struggle. It was they who induced the Indian National Congress to agree to the partition of India on a communal basis. And the result of it all is now as clear as daylight to every citizen of India.

In dividing the country, the agents of the British Government

favoured the Muslim League in distributing the provinces and demarcating their boundaries. The same game was played in the division of public funds, war materials, and other assets of the country. The British officials of the government looked upon the Muslims as their best friends—friends who had done everything in their power to side with them and resist India's fight for freedom. As a result of this clique, the whole country was split up in a most artificial manner, ignoring natural barriers and geographical boundaries. The British knew that this unnatural division of the country would, like the fabled Pandora's box, let loose many evils that would teach the people of India a good lesson. It would sow seeds of discord among the people, so that a time might come when they would cry for the return of British rule to India. The history of India during these years proves that their wishes have been largely fulfilled. Communal riots have drenched the country in blood from time to time. The feeling of enmity between the two states is growing stronger and stronger everyday. And each of them has to spend vast sums of money for the defence of its frontiers, so that schemes for the development of agriculture and industries cannot be stepped up. The poor and helpless masses of these states have become poorer. What is worse, the position of the minorities in Pakistan is most unsafe, uncertain, and unbearable. The introduction of the passport and visa system has virtually cut off all convenient means of contact between East and West Bengal. And the creation of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan has completely shaken the confidence of the minorities in East Bengal. And they are rushing to India in hundreds and thousands every week. Indeed, as Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has recently declared, about 30% of the entire non-muslim population of this part of Pakistan has migrated to India, and the influx of refugees is still increasing. In East Bengal the people were called upon to learn Urdu, the language of the ruling clique in Pakistan. And for years attempts were made to make Urdu the state language, although the vast majority of the people love and speak Bengali, their mother-tongue.

The division of a country on the basis of religion is opposed to every principle of democracy. Yet, by a strange irony, the people of England and America are behind this move. This proves how men may turn false to their own faith and ideal of government in self-interest. It is a shame to the countrymen of George Washington and Abraham Lincoln to ally themselves with men who are hostile to democracy—men who are labouring to build up a theocratic state. Today America has revealed herself in her true colours by giving military aid to Pakistan. And some years ago, she induced Pakistan to flout the verdict of the people and establish a military despotism in East Bengal.

However, there is no power on earth that can chain the forces of democracy. Let us hope that a time will come when India and Pakistan will rise above all evils, and be inspired by the highest ideals of good government—a government founded on the will of the people. They will shed all their fears, hatred, and jealousy, and work for the peace, prosperity, and happiness of their people.

Let us look at the example of the smaller states of Europe. A man who desires to travel to Italy will have to cross the English Channel and land in Calais in France. From there he will have to pass through three or four independent states before he reaches Italy. Yet, he does not feel the least difficulty in travelling, as all these countries are friendly neighbours. This is because these are states, where the people have not mixed up politics with religion. They have taken the lessons of history to heart. They recall the dark days of old, when all Europe was torn with religious conflicts, and millions of men and women lost their lives. We hope and trust that, with the progress of education, culture, and enlightenment, the young men of these two sister states will be inspired by the same ideal, and live in bonds of love, amity, and goodwill for ever.

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### THE PROBLEM OF REFUGEES IN INDIA

The partition of India was attended with many evils. Throughout its long career, the Indian National Congress fought for the freedom and unity of our motherland. In trying to bring about peace and amity between the Hindus and the Muslims, it went far, and indeed very far. It made large concessions to the Muslims and entered, from time to time, into pacts which did not work for long. The Muslims were encouraged by British officials and European commercial magnates to demand more and more by pressure-tactics. At last they demanded the right to secede from the Union of India. Communal riots broke out in Calcutta and East Bengal, against which there was a serious reaction in Bihar. Thousands of people were killed and properties, worth many millions, were looted and burnt.

These riots proved that the Muslims were determined to wrest their demands by force. Most of the governors of provinces were with them. In Bengal there was a British governor, who refused to take any action against the men who

were responsible for the great Calcutta Killing of 1946. He declared that he could not interfere with the ministry which commanded a majority in the legislature. But this jewel of a governor forgot that the legislature was composed of members chosen on communal tickets. The Muslims had a very large number of seats allotted to them, some of the Congress members were in jail, and the government was backed by European and Anglo-Indian members, who were given seats in the legislature beyond all proportions. The policy of these gentlemen reminds one of Rome burning and Nero fiddling. Inspite of all these things, the Indian National Congress stood for the freedom and unity of India. The worst had come to the worst. If the Indian National Congress had valiantly fought for its principles, India would never have been split into two hostile states. They had before them the example of Abraham Lincoln, who fought for the unity of the United States of America, and maintained it after four years of Civil War. But for him, the United States of America could never have been what they are today. Moreover, the division of a country on the basis of religion is against the very spirit of democracy, which has always been the ideal of government preached by the Congress. Yet, they were induced by a distinguished leader of South India to give their consent to the partition of India. And on the 15th of August, 1947, this ancient land was split up into two independent states—India and Pakistan.

The partition was followed by a furious outburst of communal frenzy in West Pakistan, and specially in the Punjab. Thousands of men, women, and children were killed, and the streets were flowing with blood. Properties worth about a hundred crores were destroyed. What was worse, hundreds and thousands of men and women fled across the borders for shelter and safety. They had lost their all, and lived for months in a most miserable and helpless condition. And many of them died of cold and hunger. The result was that not a single Hindu was left in West Pakistan. Faithful to their promise, the Government of India took energetic action for their relief and rehabilitation. But it was a stupendous problem which could not be solved in years. All the resources of the Government of India were tapped to help these people in the great crisis. The Government opened transit camps all over the country, where the refugees were received, and given shelter and doles until they were rehabilitated. For this work the refugees were divided into three classes—agriculturists, industrialists, and professional men. The agriculturists were given loans for buying lands and bullocks. The industrialists were settled in small townships, set up in Delhi, Faridabad, Nilokheri, Fulia, Habra, and some other places.

They were given building and housing loans, so that they might be able to run some sort of a trade, and earn their living. The professional men were registered with the refugee and rehabilitation offices and the Employment Exchange set up by the Government of India. And the State governments were directed to give them priority, and absorb them in gainful occupations as early as possible. In these refugee townships, the government arranged for sanitation and supply of drinking water. They opened many schools for giving free primary education to refugee children. Those who went to schools or colleges, were awarded handsome stipends.

Most of these refugees had been rendered poor and homeless. Yet, they felt the thrill of a new life when they came to this country. There are many examples of refugees clearing jungles, ploughing the fields, reaping corn, and founding colonies of their own. The government appreciated their efforts for self-help and made them generous grants. We are told that about fifty lacs of people have migrated to India from West Pakistan. And the number of men and women who have come from East Pakistan is about forty lacs. But this is not all. Something like forty to fifty thousand people are now coming to India every month. This is the serious state of things disclosed by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in his latest speech on the subject. There is no doubt that some Muslims have left for Pakistan, but their number is very small. Only eight thousands of them went to East Bengal, but of them seven thousands have returned to India. The latest figures given by our Rehabilitation Minister reveal what the Government of India have done for these refugees. He says that 250,000 families have been rehabilitated on land, and 160,000 families in other rural occupations. Employment has been given to 250,000 families, and homes to 350,000 of them. The idea of the government is to distribute these refugees all over India, and the provincial governments have warmly responded to their call. But it has been found that many of these refugees cannot adjust themselves to new surroundings and prefer to remain in their home-province. We hope that, in future, the government will try to accommodate them, as far as possible, in familiar surroundings and among people speaking the same language, and following the same customs.

The Government of West Bengal have been running several refugee camps, the biggest of which is the Cooper's Camp. They have built up some refugee colonies, and made arrangements for giving vocational training to them. But it must be said that, for about a year and a half, the Government of India paid little or no attention to the refugees, who were streaming in from East Bengal. This was due to the gross misrepresen-

tation of the actual state of things, made to them by some gentlemen who were running the government of West Bengal at the time. Most of them were eminent political leaders, who had left their homes in East Bengal as soon as the idea of partition was in the air. They were more eager to please the Government of India than to relieve the sufferings of millions of men, women, and children, who were virtually compelled to leave their hearths and homes in Pakistan. Their callous indifference to this burning problem was exposed in a letter addressed to the Government of India—a letter which Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy read out before the West Bengal Legislative Assembly some time ago.

As it is, much time has been lost and great mischief already done. It is now time for us to forget parties and politics, and work, shoulder to shoulder, for the relief of our helpless brethren who have come from the other side of Bengal. It is also the duty of all the refugees to work hard and try to help themselves to the best of their powers and abilities. There is a joy in honest work and a pleasure in self-help. In all their toil and trouble they should remember the wise and inspiring words of Carlyle :

"Blessed is he who has found his work, let him ask no other blessedness."

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### THE KASHMIR PROBLEM

Since the dawn of independence, India has been faced with many problems. And the most serious of them all is the situation in Kashmir. Kashmir was a native state in British India. Soon after the British had left India, Kashmir was raided by a number of wild tribes on the frontier, who were incited by the rulers of Pakistan and aided by their armed forces. Finding no way out of this crisis, Kashmir acceded to the Union of India on October 26, 1947. Indeed, some portions of Kashmir territory had already been occupied by Pakistan before India was invited to defend her. But the rulers of Pakistan stoutly denied that they had any part in the tribal raids on Kashmir. However, when India was fighting for the liberation of Kashmir, she was ill-advised to lodge a complaint before the United Nations Organization. She complained that Pakistan was an aggressor and appealed to the United Nations to induce her to withdraw her forces from the territories of Kashmir. Pakistan denied these allegations through her representative, Sir Zafrullah Khan. After

wasting a good deal of time, the United Nations ordered a cease-fire in Kashmir, just at the time when India was about to drive the raiders out of the State. We are told that India was in sight of victory, and the whole thing would have been finished in a fortnight more. But the rulers of India were very obliging to the United Nations, and agreed to the cease-fire after spending tons of money and throwing away hundreds of heroic lives on the battlefields of Kashmir. There is at least one name that rises uppermost in our memory to-day. It is that of a brilliant young soldier, Brigadier Osman, who was hit by a Pakistani bullet and killed. Be it remembered that Brigadier Osman was a devout Muslim. Yet, he rushed to battle and to death to save the honour and freedom of his motherland. Like a true patriot, he felt that he was an Indian first, and then a Muslim.

But to return to our story. The United Nations shirked the real issue, and began to treat India and Pakistan on equal footing. What is worse, England and the United States have, on more than one occasion, revealed their secret sympathy for Pakistan. In this game they have been deeply influenced by political motives. They know that Kashmir is a land, round which meet the frontiers of five great states of the world—India, Pakistan, Russia, China, and Afghanistan. In the north of Kashmir is Gilgit, which is a place of great importance from the military point of view. That is why, when the English quitted India, they desired to place Kashmir under the trusteeship of the United Nations. The isolation of Kashmir as a trust of the United Nations is the object of a political game played by England and America. They want to use Kashmir as a bastion against Communist Russia. Failing this, they would like to see it pass under the rule of Pakistan—a state created by British policy, that may be safely relied upon as a base for operation against Russia. This has now become as clear as daylight by America's decision to grant arms aid to Pakistan. Pakistan has now gone a step farther by joining the South East Asia Defence Organization and signing the Bagdad Pact.

We shall do well to remember that when the Maharajah of Kashmir acceded to India, Lord Mountbatten was the Governor General of this country. He accepted the offer on behalf of the Government of India. At that time, he expressed the hope that the people of Kashmir would decide their future, when normal conditions were restored. In a word, the wishes of the people of Kashmir would be consulted when the time came to decide whether Kashmir would join India or Pakistan. Sir Owen Dixon was directed by the United Nations to enquire about the complaint lodged by India. He reported that India was in-

Kashmir by her right and controlled the defence, communications, and external affairs of the state. He also declared that Pakistan was an aggressor. But his recommendations about the strength of the armies of India and Pakistan on two sides of the cease-fire line were not acceptable to India. After this the United Nations appointed Dr. Harold Graham to arbitrate between India and Pakistan. India denied the right of Dr. Graham to arbitrate and give his award. She made it clear that she would welcome Dr. Graham as a mediator, and not an arbitrator. Dr. Graham tendered four reports, but they were not accepted either by India or Pakistan. After this it would have been good for the United Nations to shake their hands off Kashmir. But that was not to be. To please Pakistan, Sir Gladwyn Jebb moved a resolution before the United Nations, which was sponsored by England and the United States of America. It was a move to go back on the previous resolutions of the United Nations, and to place the armies of India and Pakistan on the same footing. Far from declaring Pakistan an aggressor, the United Nations described Pakistan as the very picture of injured innocence. It is now clear to all the world that the United Nations have been always moved by purely selfish motives in dealing with the problem of Kashmir.

More than eight years have passed away and the problem of Kashmir is still unsolved. The right of India is perfectly legal and no commission has ever questioned it. She has declared that, in spite of her legal right, she is prepared to hold a plebiscite in Kashmir when normal conditions are restored and all foreign elements have been cleared out of the country. But the United Nations seem to be blind to the most essential conditions of a fair and impartial plebiscite. They are supporting the demand of Pakistan to hold a plebiscite, when one-third of Kashmir territory is in the unlawful possession of Pakistan.

It is for this reason that eminent men like Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee repeatedly tried to induce the Government of India to withdraw their complaint from the United Nations, from whom no justice can ever be expected. But, for reasons best known to them, the Government of India did not do so. We are, however, glad to find that the grant of American arms aid to Pakistan has compelled Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru to rise from his slumber. At last he has declared openly that the arms aid to Pakistan has completely changed India's attitude to the Kashmir problem. It has been proved also that, at the instigation of the United States of America, Sheikh Abdullah was trying to make Kashmir an independent territory, which would be transferred to Pakistan at a convenient time. When these things were brought to light, there was a revolution in Kashmir. Sheikh Abdullah was

removed from the office of Premier, arrested, and placed under detention.

Kashmir is now in the able hands of Bukshi Golam Mohammad, who has declared for India. He has adopted beneficent measures for removing poverty and giving education to the people of the State. He has also, with the generous help of the government of India, vastly improved Kashmir's trade, commerce, and means of communication. And to crown all, the Constituent Assembly of Kashmir has declared that Kashmir has acceded to India. And there can no longer be any question of a foreign power standing between Kashmir and her people.

The problem of Kashmir has now been deeply influenced by other considerations. Pakistan has joined the South East Asia Defence Organization led by America and the United Kingdom. And she has also signed the Bagdad Pact. These two have been declared to be defence organizations, though they are power blocs in disguise. Moreover, Pakistani police and troops have made many raids on the frontiers of India. So, at long last, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has declared that he has no faith in the United Nations Organization, and there can be no question of a plebiscite in Kashmir.

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### INDUSTRIALIZATION—ITS GOOD AND EVILS

Industrialization is the order of the day. All over the world, there is a growing demand for the progress of industries. And every thoughtful man of our age realizes that no country can prosper and relieve the sufferings of her people without the rapid development of industries. This is the reason why the Government of India have drawn up the Five Year Plan, for the improvement of agriculture, industries, irrigation, supply of cheap electricity, and many other useful things for the good of the people. This will be followed by the Second Five Year Plan, which aims at developing industries, increasing national income, removing social injustice, and ridding the country of the curse of poverty and unemployment.

But there are some eminent men who are against the industrialization of a country like India. They tell us that India is essentially an agricultural country. They feel that the vast masses of people in our country are poor, and they have no capital for the development of industries. They think that mills, factories, and power-houses cannot be worked

without a big capital. In their view, the small capital that is available in our country, should be used for the improvement of agriculture. They go to the length of saying that India is not only wanting in capital but also in skilled labour. So, they hold that the people of India should devote themselves only to agriculture. They fear that, if the people of our country take to industries, they will not be able to compete with the rich countries of the West. Indeed, they will have to sell their goods at lower prices and bring ruin on themselves.

The first and foremost among them all was Mahatma Gandhi, who felt honestly that the rise and spread of industries in India would bring sorrows and sufferings to vast millions of men and women all over the land. That is why he called on our people, again and again, to till the land and take to spinning. He practised what he preached, and devoted a part of his time everyday to spinning and gardening. For the same reason, he advised his countrymen not to use mill-made cloth. He told them to wear divine *khaddar*, if they cared to live and work for the good of the motherland.

There were also other reasons for which he raised his voice against industrialization. He thought that the mines, mills, and factories, would call away the labourers from the village to the city, from smiling cornfields to the wheels of roaring machines. All these things would spoil their health, rob them of their peace of mind, and sow in their hearts the seeds of discontent. It was his faith that industrialization had a demoralizing influence on society. He was partly right, as most of the labourers in industrial areas are given to drinking, gambling, and other vices. After the day's grinding toil, a labourer in our country spends his hard-earned wages in drinking, quarrelling, fighting, and even abusing and thrashing the poor women of the household.

Again, the rich owners of mills, mines, and factories try to make the most of their money. They compel the labourers to work, for long hours a day, under the most inhuman and unhealthy conditions. These places are full of smoke and dust and filth. There men, women, and children are working from morning till evening. They suffer in health, and are often afflicted with deadly diseases. There are many of them who hew coals in the dark mines at grave risk, not only to their health but also to their lives.

Again, they are at the mercy of capitalists who suck their blood to make huge profits, and live like princes in pomp and luxury. The spread of industries, in the view of these great thinkers, is making the rich richer and the poor even poorer than they were. They have also given rise to labour disputes

and long-drawn litigations. Moreover, there are political leaders who use the labourers as pawns in party games. They pull the strings from behind, and incite the labourers against their employers. The result is that there are strikes that often bring more misery than relief to men who are toiling for their bread. In many cases, these strikes lead to violence, bloodshed, and even loss of lives. And very often those who lead the strikes keep themselves in the background, and take the fullest advantage of these disputes. They raise subscriptions from these poor labourers to swell party funds and carry on their political activities. Indeed, industrialization makes the people of a country cold, callous, and selfish to the core. It spoils good relations between man and man, encourages evil habits, and destroys peace, harmony, and feelings of love and charity. What is worse, it rears a most artificial and mechanical society that has little faith in God and religion. These are the reasons for which many good and great men have raised their voice against industrialization.

But, great as they are, these men have looked only at one side of the picture. There is no doubt that India is a vast field for agricultural development. But to depend only on agriculture is a serious defect of our economic life. The majority of men in our country live on the land, and still our agriculture leaves much to be desired. For the improvement of agriculture on modern lines, we require large-scale farming, which calls for capital and organization. Moreover, agriculture gives employment to many of our men and women for about three months, and they have to sit idle for nine months in the year. Where will these people go to earn their living? The only answer to this question is that we must develop our industries to solve this vast unemployment problem, not only for the peasants but for the army of educated young men who have no work to do, and no means to keep body and soul together. Indeed, even agricultural improvement is not possible without the development of industries. We must have tractors, fertilizers, power, and irrigation canals for watering the soil, improving its quality, and raising abundant crops to feed our hungry millions. We have also to help them in earning something to meet the needs of daily life. And we can never have tractors, fertilizers, pumps to drain water, and cheap electricity without the help of industries. We shall have to water the cornfields when there is no rain for months. We shall have to drain them when there is flood. If we depend entirely on the mercy of Nature, we shall be absolutely helpless when crops fail. In America they have worked miracles in agriculture with the help of science and industry. Water, drawn from rivers hundreds of miles away, are made to flow across California, vast portions of which were

without a big capital. In their view, the small capital that is available in our country, should be used for the improvement of agriculture. They go to the length of saying that India is not only wanting in capital but also in skilled labour. So, they hold that the people of India should devote themselves only to agriculture. They fear that, if the people of our country take to industries, they will not be able to compete with the rich countries of the West. Indeed, they will have to sell their goods at lower prices and bring ruin on themselves.

The first and foremost among them all was Mahatma Gandhi, who felt honestly that the rise and spread of industries in India would bring sorrows and sufferings to vast millions of men and women all over the land. That is why he called on our people, again and again, to till the land and take to spinning. He practised what he preached, and devoted a part of his time everyday to spinning and gardening. For the same reason, he advised his countrymen not to use mill-made cloth. He told them to wear divine *khaddar*, if they cared to live and work for the good of the motherland.

There were also other reasons for which he raised his voice against industrialization. He thought that the mines, mills, and factories, would call away the labourers from the village to the city, from smiling cornfields to the wheels of roaring machines. All these things would spoil their health, rob them of their peace of mind, and sow in their hearts the seeds of discontent. It was his faith that industrialization had a demoralizing influence on society. He was partly right, as most of the labourers in industrial areas are given to drinking, gambling, and other vices. After the day's grinding toil, a labourer in our country spends his hard-earned wages in drinking, quarrelling, fighting, and even abusing and thrashing the poor women of the household.

Again, the rich owners of mills, mines, and factories try to make the most of their money. They compel the labourers to work, for long hours a day, under the most inhuman and unhealthy conditions. These places are full of smoke and dust and filth. There men, women, and children are working from morning till evening. They suffer in health, and are often afflicted with deadly diseases. There are many of them who hew coals in the dark mines at grave risk, not only to their health but also to their lives.

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once a desert. Today this desert has been turned into a most fertile valley, rich in fruits and flowers. This shows that even agriculture cannot be improved without the help of industries. The great river valley projects of India are working to this end.

It is also true that, in spite of our best efforts, we have not been able to make the world free from want and misery. The selfishness, jealousy, and cruelty of man lead to war among the nations of the world. When a war is raging, we have to defend our hearths and homes against the enemy. We must have our army, navy, air-forces, planes, and ammunitions. Where shall we get them without the help of industries ? But this is not all. How shall we feed our hungry men, women, and children unless we grow more food in our country ? And we can grow more food with the aid of things that are produced by industries. The last World War has taught us that we must either produce or perish.

There is no doubt that we have not made much progress in this line, except in cotton, iron and steel, sugar, jute, and paper mill industries. We have also a large number of factories for cement, matches, leather goods, and chemicals. The most important among these are our cotton, iron, steel, and jute industries, which have a very large demand in the world market. Yet, our progress in industries is far too small, when we think that we live in a country of about four hundred million men and women. That is why we must develop our industries along with agriculture. This will vastly increase our national income, and save the masses from poverty, disease, and the pangs of hunger. Industrialization has its good and evils like all things else on earth. Yet, it is a great blessing, if we carry it on with care, diligence, and sympathy for the teeming millions of India. And it is the duty of the State to help the industries with capital and expert advice. The need of the hour is not to cry down the industries but to develop them at full speed along with agriculture. Indeed, India will enjoy eternal peace and plenty, when her agriculture and industries flourish side by side.

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### COMMUNITY PROJECTS

India is mainly an agricultural country and eighty-three per cent of her people live in the villages. The Community Projects have been planned and started by the Government of India, in order to help these people in living peaceful, laborious, and contented life in the villages. As the vast majority of the people

in our country live on the land, the Community Projects have laid special stress on the development of agriculture. They aim at introducing a new pattern of living in the villages. For the present, the scheme has been applied to a number of selected villages in different parts of the country. There are now in working fifty-five projects, covering seventeen thousand and five hundred villages, and twelve million people. The idea behind the scheme is that the number of these projects will rise to six hundred in four years, and serve the needs of one hundred and twenty million people.

These projects are intended to cover all the varied aspects of village life. Since the crux of the problem is the abject poverty of the people, efforts are being made to raise the money-income of the people living in the villages. It is well known that, here in India, agriculture is the largest source of wealth among the vast majority of our people. That is why measures have been adopted to use seeds and manures of better quality, and water the cornfields in times of drought. Similarly, there are arrangements for pumping water in times of flood. Over and above all this, the government are supplying tractors and fertilizers to the cultivators to improve the quality and quantity of the crops raised by them. Efforts have also been made to induce the people living in the villages not to split up their lands into small plots. They have been advised to combine their small holdings and work together, not only in tilling the land and reaping corn, but also in selling their products in the market at a fair price.

But this is not all. These measures are to be taken, hand in hand, with the building up of small industries in the villages. Each group of villages is to be linked to a centre of small and medium-scale industries, which will relieve the pressure of population on land. It will have roads, houses, schools, dispensaries, hospitals, means for the improvement of sanitation, education, and recreation centres. It has been felt that, without these simple amenities of life, there can be no improvement in the condition of the villages, in which live the teeming millions of India. There is also provision for setting up, in each of these Development Blocks, a rural township of one or two thousand families, with a bank, a high school, a hospital, and the like. These townships will be the centre of the social, economic, and cultural life of a group of villages. The needs of trade, industry, and public services in these townships will give employment to a large number of villagers in each area. Moreover, they will have their own water-works, electricity, shopping centre, post and telegraph office, agricultural school, dairy, poultry, nursery, and veterinary hospital.

Again, three of these Development Blocks will combine into a Project Area of three hundred villages. The headquarters of the Project Area will be a much larger township, with a Basic Teachers' Training College, a Technical Training Centre, a Tractor Service, Supply Station, and so on. For the present only a few townships have been started, but quite a large number of Development Blocks have been set up all over India. In West Bengal, there are two Development Blocks in Birbhum district, two in Burdwan, and one each in 24 Parganas, Midnapur, and Nadia. These Community Development Projects have come down to us from the townships of Faridabad, Nilokheri, and Etawah, which were started to cope with the problem of refugees in the wake of independence.

There is no doubt that the government have set up a network of organizations to carry on these projects. But the essence of the projects is that the people themselves must take part in them and look upon them as their own. This will create a zeal for these projects among the people of the villages. They will give a new life to these people and win their faith and confidence. It is only when the people are filled with the spirit of love; service, and self-help that they will put their shoulders to the wheel and work, heart and soul, to make the Community Development Projects a success. And indeed the peace and prosperity of countless millions of our countrymen will depend on the fulfilment of these projects. If they are honestly worked out, with the combined efforts of the government and the people, they will be able to give bread to the hungry millions of India and bring peace and contentment to every home. And a time will come when the whole country will be dotted with townships, big and small, which will be linked with the villages on one side and the cities on the other. They will blend industry with agriculture, and manual labour with the blessings of education. They will replace deep-seated unrest and labour troubles by peace, happiness, and a feeling of brotherhood between man and man. In the course of the next six years, the Government of India intend to work up about three hundred and fifty projects at a cost of two hundred and fifty crores of rupees. The projects are to be financed jointly by the Government of India and the United States of America. It is good for us to know that they were first started in 1952, on the second day of October, the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi.

There are, however, diehards in the ranks of the Congress and outside, who cry down these projects as they have been liberally financed by America and worked with the help of foreign experts, here and there. But they forget that, with our limited resources, we cannot carry on these projects as we should. We shall indeed have to wait for a long time, before we

can make any progress worth the name. If we look at the history of the other countries of the world, we shall find that they had to seek the aid of the more advanced nations of the day, in building up their economy, arts, and industries. This is what happened in Russia in the past, and this is how Japan rose to be one of the most powerful and prosperous nations of the world.

There was a time when Japan was steeped in the darkness of ignorance and superstition. She was kept out of all contact with the culture and civilization of the West. But the growing spirit of the people of Japan broke this iron cordon. Some of her leaders had to languish in prison or die for their love of knowledge and patriotism. But the rulers of Japan could not chain the spirit of the people for all times. Her great leaders resolved to make the country rich, prosperous, enlightened, and civilized. They invited foreign teachers and learned men of science. They learnt from these men how to build up their science, arts, industries, railways, and communications. They welcomed these great workers from the West, and reared their country to the highest level of enlightenment and prosperity. Today the cities of Japan are looked upon as models for their neatness, cleanliness, and beauty of planning. Japan has her railways, electric plants, shipping, and aeroplanes. She has trained her people so thoroughly that she does not require any help from outside in trying times. Her soldiers are the best and the most well-disciplined, and her navy vanquished Russia in the Russo-Japanese War of 1905.

But her towering ambition has now brought about her downfall, and she is building up her shattered industries with American help. Yet, her wonderful recovery has surprised all the world and, once more, our markets have been flooded with Japanese goods. America has quitted Japan and returned to her all her islands in the Pacific. And we are sure that the time is not far off when she will be, once again, the envy of the world. Here in India, we must take a leaf out of her book, and build up our arts, industries, and communications on modern lines by our own efforts, if possible, and with foreign aid if necessary. And we shall accept the help offered by other countries, if there are no strings attached to it. That is why we must rise above bigotry and intolerance in working for the good of the motherland. This is the spirit in which our Community Projects are to be worked, in the years to be.

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## RIVER VALLEY PROJECTS OF INDIA

There was a time when India was regarded as a land of peace and plenty. But the times are changed, and we are now inclined to think that this is only a dream dreamt by our poets and philosophers. Yet, it was true in days, long, long, gone by. In those times India was not as densely populated as she is today, and her people could live on the land. Many big rivers, canals, and streams watered the cornfields of India. But things changed when the British came to rule over the country. They built embankments for their railways and stemmed the flow of waters in many places. That is why vast tracts of the country were flooded every year and crops were destroyed. Moreover, the clearing of forests for starting mills and factories lessened the rainfall in the country, and thousands of trees were felled every year for timber. The result was that, at times, large areas of arable lands were left untilled for want of rainfall. So, most of our cultivators had to depend on the mercy of Nature for rainfall. Famines broke out from time to time and large numbers of men, women, and children perished in hunger. We read, in the writings of Bankimchandra, of the terrible suffering of the people during the great famine of 1176 B. S. Millions of men, women, and children died, and many of them lived on roots and leaves of trees. Moreover, the British did not encourage industries, as far as they could. They used to take raw materials from this country at a low price, and export them to India as finished products. They used to carry away raw cotton and sell finished, mill-made cloths and textiles to us. They established a few industries only during the last World War, when all imports were stopped.

With the coming of independence, the leaders of our country have turned their attention to these problems. The Government of India have made the Five Year Plan for making the best use of all the natural resources of our country for the improvement of agriculture, prevention of famines, and the spread of industries. They have recommended measures which will raise the money-income of the teeming millions of India and give bread to the poor.

As India is mainly an agricultural country, the framers of the Five Year Plan have thought, first of all, of giving facilities for irrigating the cornfields in times of drought, and of draining water when they are flooded. They have started a number of River Valley Projects with this object in view. There were no doubt some river valley projects in India in the past. There were canals from the river Jumna and the Cauvery Delta

about one hundred years ago. They were followed by the digging of a number of canals in the United Provinces and the Punjab. At present there are twelve major river valley projects before the Government of India. The most important among them are the Bhakra Nangal Project in the Punjab, the Damodar Valley Project in Bihar and West Bengal, the Kosi Dam Project in Bihar, the Hirakud Dam Project in Orissa, and the Tungabhadra and Godavari Projects in South India. We may also mention the Mayurakshi Reservoir Project in West Bengal, as a thing of special importance to us. When these projects are carried out, they will cost India nineteen hundred crores of rupees and irrigate twelve million acres of land. Apart from other things, they will make India self-sufficient in food and other requirements.

Some of these projects will be able to pay their costs in ten years after completion. Yet, there are much larger projects that will not fulfil this condition. It is expected that, even they will, in the long run, not only repay the money spent on them, but also bring peace, plenty, and prosperity to the people of India.

India has devoted many years to river research. As early as 1920, a hydro-dynamic research station was opened at Poona. In 1948 the Government of India started another research station, which has rendered valuable service in this direction. It is hoped that, in a few years, the food problem of India will be solved, and her industries will make much progress.

Among these projects, the most important is the Bhakra Nangal Project in the Punjab. It is intended to construct a dam, about 860 feet high, on the banks of the Sutlej. This will generate forty million kilowatts of electricity and irrigate thirty-six million acres of land. It will cost one hundred and thirty-two crores of rupees. The first stage of this grand project is now complete. It was opened, a year ago, by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru amid the rejoicings of the nation. To the people of West Bengal, the Damodar Valley Project is the most important. It will control the floods of the Damodar, the river of sorrow, irrigate about two million acres of land, and generate about twenty-four million kilowatts of electricity. The cost of the scheme will be about sixty-seven crores. For the working out of this scheme, the government is acting on the advice of two famous American experts. Under the Damodar Valley Project, the Konar Dam was opened on the 15th October, 1955, on the Konar river in the district of Hazaribagh, about twenty-three miles from its confluence with the Damodar. It will irrigate vast areas of land, and supply cooling water to the D. V. C.'s Thermal Power station at Bokaro. Then comes the Mayuraskhi Reservoir Project. Under the project, the Canada Dam on the

Maurakshi has been erected at Massanjore. Then comes the Durgapur Barrage. It stands at the very apex of the canal system, which extends over an area of 2,200 square miles. The left bank of the main canal will meet the Hooghly thirty-five miles north of Calcutta. It will be used as a navigation canal connecting Calcutta with the Ondal coalfields. When completed, it will irrigate six hundred thousand acres of land and generate four thousand kilowatts of electricity.

The Government have also in view the Kosi Project, which aims at the construction of a dam of enormous height on the banks of this turbulent river. If the scheme be successfully worked out, it will control the terrible floods of the Kosi river, generate plenty of cheap electricity, and help irrigation and navigation, silt-control, fish culture, and many other useful things needed by us. The plan has, however, given rise to sharp differences of opinion between the governments of Bihar and West Bengal. Each of them is now agitating for the construction of a barrage over the Ganges on a site of its own choice.

There are also the Narmada and Tungabhadra projects in South India, which have made fair progress and are nearing completion. When completed, they will prevent droughts, irrigate vast areas of land, and save South India from the grip of famine.

The River Valley Projects are simply invaluable to a land of many rivers like India. They will water millions of acres of land all over the country—lands that will be rich in fruits, flowers, and smiling cornfields. They will supply power for the running of industries and agriculture on modern lines. They will prevent famines and bring plenty of crops to the doors of the poor peasants every year. They will also open up waterways and electrify mills, factories, and railways. This will make it possible to carry food from one province to another much more swiftly than now. Indeed, flood, famine, and failure of crops will be things of the past, and India will once again be a land flowing with milk and honey.

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### SCHEME FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF RURAL AREAS

The peace and prosperity of free India depend on the development of her rural areas. The vast masses of people in our country live in the villages. But it is a pity that little or no attention has been paid so far to this great and urgent problem. The British government built many splendid cities and beautiful hill-stations. They also encouraged trade and commerce, so far

as it was in their interest to do so. But they suffered the villages to lie neglected and uncared for. The result was that the villages were filled with jungles and stinking pools. They became hotbeds of malaria, which afflicted every home. To add to their miseries, the villagers could not get medical relief when they were ill. They suffered from the want of pure drinking water, and many of them died of cholera during the hot months of the year. It was under these cheerless and inhuman conditions that they had to earn their living by tilling the fields and reaping the corn for the benefit of their landlords. They received poor wages that were hardly enough to cover their nakedness and enable them to keep body and soul together. They could rarely enjoy one full meal a day, and ran into debt in meeting the needs of daily life. They had not the means to clear off their debts or pay the heavy interests on the loan raised in times of need. So, their lands were sold in course of time, and they became paupers out and out. It has been rightly observed by one of our leading economists that the ryot in India is born in debt, lives in debt, and dies in debt. In the past, the tenancy laws made by the government, from time to time, gave them little relief. They lived and died in 'poverty, hunger, and dirt'. Moreover, flood, famine, and failure of crops for want of rain, increased their sufferings tenfold. High hopes were held out before them when India became free. But nine long years have passed away and the villages still remain where they were. The Government have passed laws for the abolition of zamindary. But this will mean no relief or gain to the ryots, as the government themselves will now turn into Zamindars in the place of those whom they have displaced. It will be even worse in one sense. The much-maligned Zamindar used to remit a part of the rent, when pressed by the tenant, or realize it by small instalments. He had to go to the court to realize the rent due to him, which was a long and tedious process, attended with risks. But the government may realize the rent and sell the belongings of the tenants by what is known as the certificate procedure. So, the poor tenants will yet be, for long years, between the devil and the deep sea. Let us, however, hope for the best.

We should remember that the true nation dwells in cottages. The great majority of men and women in our country live in rural areas. It is, therefore, our sacred duty to devise means for their health and well-being. We shall have to consider what steps should be taken by the government and the people in this direction.

In the first place, it is the clear duty of all concerned to improve the sanitary condition of the villages. Under the lead of the government, our young men should work with common

labourers in clearing the jungles and water hyacinths, which have become the pest of every village in the country. They should teach these people the most scientific and up-to-date methods of cultivation. The government should send officers of the agriculture department to warn the people against the evils of cultivating small plots of land, and bring home to them the blessings of co-operation. They should teach these men how much of labour and time will be saved if large tracts of land are cultivated by a number of ryots working together and sharing the profits. They should tell these men also that, by this process, the fertility of the soil will be greatly increased, and they will be able to reap much more corn at a cheaper cost. The government should also give them loans, payable in easy instalments, and lend them tractors and fertilizers. The officers of the agriculture department can also teach them the use of manures which they may have at any time and near at hand. There should be dams for reserving water, which will be sent down the canals to irrigate the cornfields when there is a failure of rain. They should also be supplied with pumps to drain out water from the fields in times of flood.

But this is not all. These men should be healthy, strong, and well-fed, so that they may carry on the work of saving the villages from ruin. That is why deep tube-wells should be sunk for the supply of pure drinking water, and health-centres set up for every four or five neighbouring villages, where the people may consult qualified doctors and get medicines, free of charge. They should also be helped to start dairies and agricultural farms, for the sale of the fruits of their labour.

Again, every village should have its own primary school, for the free and compulsory education of little children. As in every civilized country, it should be the aim of the government to see that there is not a single illiterate man in the country. With a little education, these boys will become better farmers and workers.

But in drawing a scheme for the improvement of the rural areas, we must not forget that the industries of the country should not suffer. There should be a close bond of union between the village and the city in modern times. The starting of new mills, factories, and development works, may absorb a large number of villagers, who remain idle for nine months in the year. The city will help the villages with expert advice and funds needed for the improvement of rural areas. The villages, on the other hand, may supply the cities with labour, and bring food to the doors of the people living in them.

It is a happy sign of the times that, after wasting several years, the Government of India drew up the First Five Year

Plan, including many river valley projects and other useful works for the good of the people. And of late, they have announced the Second Five Year Plan, which aims at increasing national income, developing industries, removing unemployment, and raising the standard of living. Let us hope and pray that these schemes may be crowned with success, and bring health, comfort, peace, and prosperity to the teeming millions of India.

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### YOUR FAVOURITE HERO

There are many heroes and heroines, whose names are written in letters of gold in the pages of our national history. Among them is Rana Pratap Singha of Mewar, whose name is still cherished in the loving memory of our countrymen from end to end of India. Sivaji, the founder of the Marhatta Empire, was a great hero. And so was Ranjit Singh, the Lion of the Punjab. But in the strength of character, love of country, and heroic self-sacrifice, Rana Pratap Singha of Mewar stands above them all.

For long years after his accession to the throne of Delhi, Akbar had to take great pains to set his dominions in order. He had to fight against the two nephews of Sher Shah who claimed the throne of Delhi. He had to curb the insolence of his officers who had no respect for their young king. And he quelled the rebellion of some of his governors. Then he conquered many provinces and established his rule firmly. After this he turned his attention to Rajputana. The brave inhabitants of this region had always resisted the invasion of Moghul Emperors and had never been completely subdued. Akbar made up his mind to win them over by conciliation. So, he married the daughter of the Rajah of Ambar, and gave high offices of the state to many Rajput chiefs. But Uday Singha, the lord of Mewar, held out. So, Akbar marched against his capital city, Chitor. On the arrival of Akbar, Uday Singha retreated to the hills, leaving a strong army under Jaimal to defend Chitor to the last breath of horse and man. The garrison, led by Jaimal, fought bravely. But one night Jaimal was killed by a shot from Akbar's gun. The garrison abandoned all hope after the death of its valiant commander, and the Rajput women leapt into flames to save their honour. Then the men of the garrison threw themselves on Moghul swords and died, fighting to the last. But the clans of Mewar never submitted to Akbar, who had to fight them off and on, during the greater part of his reign.

Rana Pratap Singha was the son of Uday Singha, who did not surrender to Akbar even during the dark days of the invasion and destruction of Chitor. He remained independent till his death. Among his mountain retreats, he founded a new capital named Udaipur, after his name. But Akbar was determined to conquer all Rajputana and bring it under his rule. That was why, in 1576, he sent his brother-in-law, Raja Man Singha of Ambar, to complete the conquest of Rajputana. And at the battle of Haldighat, Man Singha inflicted a crushing defeat on Rana Pratap. The Rana was compelled to take shelter among the remote hills, and the strongholds of the kingdom passed into the hands of Akbar. But Pratap Singha was unbeaten. He carried on the struggle for years. He took a vow that he would not brush his beard or eat off gold and silver plates, or lie on anything but straw, until he was able to recover Chitor from the hands of the Muslims. He laid waste the plain of Mewar, and retired with his men to the Aravalli hills, from where he used to swoop down on Moghul armies and cut down whole regiments of them, whenever he had a chance. The Moghuls under Man Singha and Prince Selim did not give him rest. He had to flee from rock to rock, and see his children starving, in dirty rags. Indeed, the sufferings of his children led him, once or twice, to think of retiring towards the Indus. But his heart was in his country, and he bore his sufferings calmly. At last the gods smiled on him for his courage, endurance, and heroic self-sacrifice. The tide of his fortune turned and he recovered, one after another, most of his possessions. So, he remained unconquered and unconquerable till his death.

He was succeeded by his son Amar Singha. On the death of Akbar, Jahangir became the emperor and made several attempts to subdue Rajputana—attempts that failed till 1616. At last Prince Khurram, who became Emperor Shahjahan later on, compelled the Rana of Mewar to sue for peace. Jahangir followed the wise policy of his father and did his best to conciliate this gallant chief. He returned to the Rana all the territory taken away from him by Akbar and received, with every respect and sign of honour, the princes of Mewar who came to the court of Delhi.

This was surely an honourable termination of the patriotic labours of Rana Pratap Singha of Mewar. His courage, heroism, and silent suffering have made his name a household word in India. Indeed, his very name is a history. And even today the Ranas of Udaipur honour the memory of Pratap Singha by putting leaves under their gold dishes, and straw under their beds of silk.

The life of Rana Pratap Singha is a shining example of noble

and selfless patriotism. He has taught us that the honour of our country should stand above everything else in life. We feel, as we read of him in history, that there is no love warmer than the love of the motherland, and no sacrifice greater than suffering and dying cheerfully in the cause of freedom. Rana Pratap Singha flung away the joys of youth, and spent most of the long years of his life in working for the glory and freedom of the land of his fathers. He had lost his all, and suffered a crushing defeat at the hands of Raja Man Singha, a renegade Rajput Chief who placed his office and emoluments above his country. Man Singha was a general of the Moghul army, but he was a coward to his conscience and a traitor to his country. The defeat of Rana Pratap Singha at Haldighat was surely more glorious than the victory of Raja Man Singha. The thought of death on the battlefield had no terror for Pratap Singha, and sorrows and sufferings among the rugged hills of Rajputana could not quell his heroic spirit. He was the scion of a great house, and the lion of Rajputana. His wonderful patience, forbearance, and iron will have few parallel in the history of the world. He reminds us of Hannibal, who swore eternal hostility to Rome when he was a boy. He marched from victory to victory across all Italy. But misfortune blasted his hopes, and he had to flee from Italy. Yet, to the last day of his life, he worked for the freedom of Carthage—Carthage for which he lived and died. But we are happy to think that Rana Pratap Singha was more fortunate. Victory was his after years of suffering and struggle. And he died in the consciousness that he had recovered almost all he had lost, and the faith that Chitor will regain her glory in the years to be. He proved that 'to be weak is miserable' and 'the mind is its own place, and can make a Heaven of Hell or a Hell of Heaven'.

Indeed, his glorious and eventful life has inspired many of our Indian patriots to live, work, and die for their country. And it is these great patriots who have brought glory and freedom to this ancient land.

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## A RAILWAY JOURNEY

One of the happiest memories of the early days of my life is a railway journey to Darjeeling. It was in the glorious days before the partition of Bengal. Our college closed for the Puja vacation on the 1st October. My father was a professor of one of the most well-known colleges of Calcutta. He decided to spend the holidays at Darjeeling, and take me and my sister with him.

So, we left for Darjeeling in the first week of October. We took train at Sealdah station at about 8 o'clock at night. We were travelling in a Second Class compartment and had reserved three lower berths for sleeping at night. However, we kept sitting and talking with one another until the train reached Ranaghat. There we were pestered by a number of men who were selling sweets, tea, aerated waters, and cigarettes. We took some sweets with hot tea. My father bought a packet of cigarettes and had a hearty smoke before he went to sleep. We also fell asleep soon after, and did not wake up till the train stopped at Parbatipur in early morning. There we had hot tea and refreshments before we boarded a train on the meter-gauge line to Siliguri, at the foot of the Himalayas.

We were simply thrilled with delight when the train reached Jalpaiguri, the great centre of tea-trade in Bengal. From this station we had a very fine view of the Himalayan ranges, though a little dim and shadowy in morning mist. From now onward, it was a most interesting journey in the midst of picturesque sights all around. As the train steamed on, mile after mile, the view of the Himalayas became clearer and clearer. When we reached Siliguri at about 10 A.M., we could see the lower reaches of the Himalayas distinctly. We got down and took our breakfast in Sorabjee's restaurant. My father was not very pleased with the dishes served, as they were rather cold and had no flavour in them. We were, however, thinking of the glorious sights and sounds of Nature, that would greet us on the upward journey to Darjeeling. We had read and heard much about them from our father, who had been to this queen of hill-stations many times in the past. So, after finishing our breakfast, we took train again for Darjeeling. It was a train composed of small carriages, and not as comfortable as the Darjeeling Mail which carried us from Calcutta to Siliguri. Yet, our hearts leapt up with delight, as the train advanced on its winding way. At each turn of the way, we could see other trains running on lines far below. But we felt nervous as we looked at the deep gorges by the side of the railway line. At every turn we felt that, like Satan and his rebel host, we would fall down into the bottomless pit of hell. But these moments of fear were relieved by the glorious scenery all around that soothed our eyes all through this uphill journey. We had the pleasure of seeing any number of green hills, dotted with little huts of labourers, beautiful tea-gardens, and many a tree smiling with fruits and flowers. This is the glory of the Eastern Himalayas, which are full of green trees, flowers, and ferns all over. We had also the pleasure of seeing many springs, streams, and water-falls as the train turned round and round along the way. Indeed, the line looked like a bewildering maze of wonders. The first beautiful

station that I remember now is Tindharia. It is about three thousand feet above the sea-level. This is a place which is much liked by the people of Bengal for its mild climate and beautiful scenery. We are told that, all through the year, it is never too warm or too cold.

At about two o'clock we reached Kurseong, which is the most beautiful station on the railway. It is famous for its splendid and genial climate—a climate that is milder than that of Darjeeling. Kurseong is the headquarters of the Darjeeling Himalayan Railway—a railway which is regarded, all over our country, as a most wonderful feat of engineering. Here the train stopped for long, and most of the passengers came down to have their lunch at Scorbjee's. We too had our lunch with hot tea, biscuits, and fruits. Again the train steamed off and climbed higher and higher, until we reached Ghum, a station that is more than eight thousand feet above the sea-level. It was clouded with mist and we were feeling very cold. So, we wrapped ourselves up with blankets. My father was simply shivering with cold and smoking feverishly to keep himself warm. The cloudy sky, the mist all about us, and the puffs of smoke thrown off by my father's cigarette, made our little compartment rather dark and dingy.

It was a downward journey from Ghum to Darjeeling. Our train glided down the lines with a clatter, and we enjoyed very much the sight of the houses gleaming with electric lights on the ridges, one below another. They looked like a theatre of lights. We felt as if we were watching the *dewali* or festival of lights in a novel form.

At Darjeeling we put up at the Louis Jubilee Sanatorium for a month, during which we saw the palaces of the Maharajahs of Burdwan and Cooch-Behar, the Mall, the Government House, the Birch Hill, and the race-course at Lebong. We also visited St. Joseph's College at North Point, and St. Paul's on the heights of Jalapahar. And we took great pains to see the military barracks at Katapahar, which is usually called the fourth storey of Darjeeling. We saw the Victoria Falls that supply electricity to Darjeeling, and had a fine view of the glorious Kanchanjangha through a binocular from the Observatory Hill. Indeed, the most glorious sight at Darjeeling is the splendid Snow View—the view of Kanchanjangha, clad in eternal snow. It looks like a mountain of gold in the morning, a mountain of silver at noon, and a mountain of vermillion at sunset. But it is simply wonderful on a moonlit night.

At last came the day for return home. With a heavy heart, we boarded the train. We passed from one station to another, and felt sadder and sadder every minute. But there was one grand

sight that relieved the gloom that hung over our minds, when we were returning to Calcutta. It was the magnificent Hardinge Bridge that spanned the waters of the mighty Padma between Paksi and Poradah. The rest of the journey was more or less monotonous, and we felt a little relieved when we got down from the train at Sealdah and returned home, where our beloved mother and grandmother were waiting for us anxiously. They made us feel that, 'East or West, home is best'.

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### THE PEN IS MIGHTIER THAN THE SWORD

When we read history for the first time at school, we are attracted by the heroic deeds of great soldiers like Alexander the Great, Napoleon Bonaparte, and Julius Cæsar. The tales of heroism in the Ramayana and the Mahabharata and the history of our own land thrill our hearts with feelings of wonder and admiration. But when we become older, we read history more deeply and think also of the great poets, philosophers, and nation-builders who have played their part in the making of history. We also realize that 'they that shall take the sword shall perish with the sword.' All the glorious conquests of Alexander the Great, Julius Cæsar, and Napoleon Bonaparte have now almost faded out of memory. The splendid victories won by Germany during the first few years of the Second World War were of no avail to her in the end. Germany was defeated and all her conquests and colonial possessions were lost. The same fate came over Japan, although she was fighting for years to extend her empire. Here in India, the Moghul Empire, founded on the conquests of Babar, Humayun, and Akbar the Great, is now gone. And the British Empire in India, with its long record of battles with the French, the Dutch, and the native princes of India, is now a thing of the past, a glorious memory and a fading dream.

But the English have deeply influenced the culture and civilization of India. India's long and peaceful struggle for freedom was carried on by men who had been reared on the history, literature, and political ideology of England and the West. All this proves that empires may rise and empires may fall, but the thoughts and ideals of great men are preserved in their writings and live for ever. This is the eternal truth which has been revealed most beautifully in Mary Elizabeth Coleridge's poem, 'Egypt's Might is Tumbled Down'.

"Egypt's might is tumbled down,  
 Down a-down the deeps of thought ;  
 Greece is fallen and Troy town,  
 Glorious Rome hath lost her crown,  
 Venice's pride is nought.

"But the dreams their children dreamed  
 Fleeting, unsubstantial, vain,  
 Shadowy as the shadows seemed,  
 Airy nothing, as they deemed,  
 These remain."

Indeed, as Milton has told us, "A good book is the precious life-blood of a master-spirit, embalmed and treasured up on purpose to a life beyond life." India had lost her independence for centuries. Yet, the beauty of her art, poetry, and philosophy never perished, and won the respect and admiration of the world. Her men of science made great discoveries that stirred all Europe. But they owed their learning and spirit of research to the great books that embodied the labours of generations of scientists, and their illuminating thoughts on deep scientific problems. Even the deeds of heroism and glorious conquests that thrilled us in our childhood, are things that came down to us through books. And, in our advanced years, we have learnt from great works in history and literature how these conquests were made by spilling the blood of millions of men on fields of battle, and bringing untold sufferings on those who survived the ravages of war. It is this thought that is echoed in Southey's famous poem, 'After Blenheim'. Many of us have almost forgotten the battle of Blenheim, but we always recall the beautiful lines in which the poet has described the cruelty and horrible deeds of men who are hailed as winners of great victories :

"With fire and sword the country round  
 Was wasted far and wide,  
 And many a childing mother there  
 And new-born baby died ;  
 But things like that, you know, must be  
 At every famous victory."

And with his usual wit and humour, Bernard Shaw has told us that, 'thoughts also can explode like shells'. If we read the history of the French Revolution, or the revolutions in Soviet Russia and China, we shall find that they were deeply influenced by the writings of great thinkers. It was the preachings of Voltaire and Rousseau that inspired the French Revolution. And it was the political philosophy of Karl Marx that was behind the revolutions in Soviet Russia and China. During the days of our struggle for freedom, young Bengal was stirred by

the patriotic songs of Rabindranath Tagore, the historical novels of Bankimchandra, and the writings of men like Kaliprasanna Kavyabisarad, Brahmabandhab Upadhyaya, Surendra Nath Banerjee, and Aurobindo Ghosh in the columns of our journals. All the public meetings of those days were enlivened with the songs of Rabindranath, Rajanikanta Sen, and Bankimchandra's immortal anthem, 'Bande Mataram'.

It is the pen that has, above all, reared the civilization of which we are so proud today. And if the pen loses its power, the world will be ruled by military despots, and civilization will vanish. The election of a military man as the President of the United States of America has given rise to many troubles in the East. American military aid has created feelings of distrust and jealousy among the nations, of Asia, and the world is now in the grip of a cold war. And if ever men believe in the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, it will be through the pen—the recorder of the thoughts and ideals of wise men, embalmed in the pages of their books.

Again, man's intellectual powers are brought to light by the pen—that mighty instrument by which men rule the kingdom of thought. In our days, scientific warfare has replaced the power of the sword. Yet, the deadly weapons of destruction invented by science are the creations of the brain-power of man, derived from books. So, the pen is mightier than the sword even in the field of war.

Lastly, we must remember that we are living in an age of democracy. There are only a few countries in the world, which are still governed by kings, though in name. Whatever its failings, democracy is the ideal of the United Kingdom and indeed of all the civilized nations of the world. Even the dictators who are ruling over some of the states of Asia and Europe have kept up the show of democracy, to befool their people. But one can never befool all men for all time. So, the men of the hour are the men who can speak and write forcefully. And that is why the press is now called the fourth estate of the realm.

### STRIKES

Strikes were little known before the closing years of the nineteenth century. But with the rapid development of industrialization, the labourers in mills, factories, coal mines, iron works, and other industries hit upon the idea of going on strike, in order

to enforce their demands. They demanded higher wages, reduction of the hours of work, and other amenities of life. When their demands were refused, they tried to make terms with their employers. But when all their efforts failed, they went on strike, and refused to work until their demands were met.

There were two notable strikes in the nineties of the last century. These were the strike in Pittsburg in 1892 and the strike in Chicago in 1894. Both of these revolts of organized labour were attended with much violence. In the United Kingdom the dockers struck work in 1889 and the coal miners in 1893. There were also the strikes of the miners and railway workers in 1919 and 1921. And they were followed by the great general strike of 1926 in support of the coal miners. It lasted nine days, from May 3 to May 12. But the government of the day made valiant efforts to relieve human suffering. The supply of food and other essentials of life were maintained, and a large volunteer force kept up a fair transport service. The last Dock Strike in England not only paralysed her trade and commerce, but also seriously affected the problem of food supply.

In dwelling on strikes, we shall do well to recall the words of Bernard Shaw, in his broadcast on 'freedom' on June 17, 1935. He says that slavery is gone but an employer is now more powerful than the masters of slaves. He can turn any of his workers into the street at any moment he likes to join that 'melancholy band of lost spirits, called the unemployed'. And, with his usual humour, Bernard Shaw defines strike as 'the old oriental device of starving at your enemy's doorstep until he does you justice'. And he goes on, "the extreme form of the strike—the general strike of all the workers at the same moment—is also the extreme form of human folly, as, if completely carried out, it would extinguish the human race in a week. And the workers would be the first to perish. The general strike is trade unionism gone mad." That is why some trade unions do not sanction more than one big strike at a time. Their idea is that only one strike shall be called at a time, 'with all the other trades working overtime to support it'. This is what happened in Calcutta during the great Tramway Strike of 1953. The bus-owners made huge profits and helped the tramway workers to go on with the strike, until their demands and those of the public were met. The latest strike was that of the bank employees, which led to the breakdown of banking business for about a month. Work of the clearing house was stopped for more than three weeks, and all sorts of business were dislocated for a considerable time. Traders, customers, and depositors were put to great inconvenience and harassment.

Here in India the relations between employers and employees are much worse than in the countries of the West. Our capitalists are very unwilling to improve the condition of labourers until they are compelled to do so. And the wages paid to our labourers are so low that they are always restless and discontented. That is why the government have to interfere in labour disputes every now and then. They have set up industrial tribunals to which the discontented labourer may appeal against injustice, either by himself or through his union. But perhaps the most poorly paid people in our country are the teachers in schools and the junior members of the staff in private colleges. Things have now reached such a crisis that, for the first time in the history of our country, the teachers of Secondary Schools in Calcutta went on strike. We are glad to find that, after a good deal of bargaining, the government have conceded most of their demands.

Strikes generally take three forms. Sometimes the workers would not attend their place of work and picket at the doors to prevent others from coming. Sometimes they would enter their mill or factory only to lay down their tools. There is another form of strike, which is known as slow-down strike. The men on strike would come and work, but work slowly to cut down production. The owners try to bring them down on their knees by ordering lockouts. They would close their workshops for a fairly long time and throw their workers out of employment. We feel that most of these strikes can be averted if the capitalists, as well as the workers, realize their duties to society. The capitalist has the right to carry on his business and the worker has the right to get fair wages. In these hard days, the capitalists must be prepared to cut down their profits to help the labourers. And the labourers, in their turn, must be fair and just in their demands. They should know that no man can produce rabbits out of a top-hat. Every mill, factory, and workshop must have a reserve fund for emergency, improvement, and development works. It must also keep something for depreciation in the value and quality of the machinery. That is why both the employers and the employed should be prepared to give and take and settle their disputes fairly, speedily, and amicably. If that fails, they should go to the Labour Tribunal and accept its award with good grace.

We would, however, offer one word of advice to our labourers and fellow-workers. They should remember that when a strike is imminent, they must do their duty to the zero hour, as in England or America. They should not slow down the pace of work or create troubles before the strike is actually called, as we often find in our country. Again, when the terms are settled and the strike called off, they must go back to their work at once

and carry on as before. But we regret to observe that this is not done. The spirit of discontent smoulders in them and, for a long time, things do not come back to the normal. We are reminded of the postal strike a few years ago. The Posts and Telegraph Departments were the most efficient of all government services. But they seem to have been spoilt forever, and we hear complaints against them everyday.

We are prepared to concede that organized bargaining by strike may at times be inevitable. But it must be disciplined and well ordered, and should never hurt the interests of the public. Our labour leaders should teach the workers not only their rights but also their duties and obligations. There should also be a strong public opinion to watch and advise the labourers and capitalists, so that they may work jointly for the peace and prosperity of our country.

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### A PLEASANT TRIP

It was about ten years ago when I went for a holiday to Shillong. I left for Shillong soon after my Intermediate Examination in Arts. As I took train, I was simply thrilled with delight, when the whistle blew and the engine steamed off with puffs of smoke. I had heard from my friends and relations much about the beauty of Shillong. That is why my heart leapt up with delight at the thought of this glorious hill-station in Assam. I travelled with my parents in a Second Class Compartment, with comfortable cushioned seats, electric fans, and luxurious bathrooms. Moreover, it was a corridor train, and I walked from one compartment to another and made many friends.

In those days, there was no communal trouble in the country. We passed Poradah, crossed the Hardinge Bridge at Sarah, and then reached Parbatipur. There we took tea and refreshments. Throughout the whole night, we slept quietly on lower berths and reached Amingaon in the morning. There we saw the mighty Brahmaputra flowing on and on, with ranges of hills on both the banks. On the hills were beautiful bungalows looking down on the river below. The steamer by which we had to cross the river was waiting for us. We made our way to the steamer by a gangway. But before we reached it, we were pestered by a band of coolies, each of whom wanted to carry our luggage. With some difficulty, we selected two of them, who carried our belongings to the steamer. It was a most beautiful steamer, neat, clean and comfortable. We took our seats on the upper deck. There we finished our toilet and washing, and sat round a long dining

table for our breakfast. The steamer was, by this time, half across the river. From our seats in the steamer, we could see the famous Kamrup Hills. On the crest of these hills was the sacred temple of Kamakhya. My mother wanted to visit the temple and offer pujahs. But my father decided on this pilgrimage during our return journey from Shillong. When we landed on the other bank of the river, we boarded comfortable motor cars, and driving along winding ways, among the hills, we reached Shillong at about 10 A.M. It was a most beautiful and picturesque way, and we had the pleasure of seeing many tea and orange gardens as we passed. There were also any number of pine trees and orchards on our way to Shillong. We saw as well a number of waterfalls, springs, and little streams as we drove on.

At Shillong, we saw the beautiful lake smiling with lotuses and lovely flowers near the Government House, the long polo-ground, green hills dotted with fine bungalows, and the waterfalls for which Shillong is famous. We saw the Eden Falls, the Tiger Falls, the Sweet Falls, and many others. We also took a trip to Cherapunji, which has the largest rainfall in India. And what impressed us most was the lovely green of the hills, the fields, and the ways leading to the falls. It was so delightful and thrilling that I was reminded of Wordsworth's famous lines in 'Yarrow Visited' :

"Nor have these eyes by greener hills  
Been soothed in all my wanderings."

After a fortnight, we started for Calcutta. We were feeling cold and had warm clothes on, when we started from Shillong by motor car. But we felt warm when we reached the plains of Gauhati and saw the mighty Brahmaputra stretching into the horizon. We stopped at Pandu for a day, and my mother walked along a steep way through the hills to offer her prayers and worship in the temple of Kamakhya Devi in Kamrup. From there she came down and took her bath in the waters of the Brahmaputra. The next day we crossed the river again and took train for Calcutta in the evening. There was a European gentleman travelling with us. He had come to Shillong for playing polo. He was a jolly good fellow and talked with us all along the way. He told us that he had seen Darjeeling inside out. But he observed that Darjeeling cannot stand beside Shillong in the beauty and splendour of her natural scenery. Darjeeling's pride, he told us, is her glorious snow-view.

We reached Sealdah station at noon on the next day. It was with a heavy heart that we drove in a taxi to our home on a crowded street of Calcutta. I was tempted to exclaim with the poet, "A glory has passed away from the earth."

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## A BAD WORKMAN QUARRELS WITH HIS TOOLS

There is much truth in this well-known saying of old. There are weak, impatient, and restless men among us who can never give their heart to any work. They think that life is a bed of roses, and they may flit like butterflies from one flower-garden to another. They do not realize that everyone will have to work hard not only to earn his living, but also to do his bit for the good of the world. He should remember that his success in life depends mainly on his diligence and single-minded devotion to duty. So, he should examine himself to see whether he is to blame for anything. If he is working on a machine, he must know all its parts carefully and also the method of its working fully well. If he is unable to fit up, grease, or oil the machine, surely it will give him trouble and baffle all his efforts. That is why, he should examine every part of the machine very carefully, before he sets about his work. And, above all, he must have the patience to wait and see what has gone wrong. If he throws off his work in a huff and says that his tools are bad, he is sure to fail. It may be that the tools are bad, but it is his clear duty to mend them. He should remember that it is never too late to mend. Similarly, the girl who turns away from her sewing machine if it does not work smoothly, will never learn how to darn her clothes, make a blouse for herself, or frocks for little children. There are many happy homes in Bengal, in which women do everything by way of tailoring for their husbands and children. There are many women in middle-class families who do all the cooking, washing, and tailoring in the house to help their husbands in these hard times. It is the mistress of the house who makes a happy home, free from cares and worries. She has to cook for the family, and she must not spoil the dishes by saying that either the oven or the frying pan is bad. If there is anything wrong, she should mend or change it instead of running away from the kitchen and shouting at the top of her voice. In the same way, a player who has lost a game should not complain that the ground was wet, the ball was leaky, or the referee was partial. He should not care for these things at all. He should play on, and play the game. Just in the same way, a student may leave the examination hall if the questions are difficult or the paper and ink, supplied by the university, are of a bad quality. He should surely sit for the examination, answer the questions to the best of his ability, and then request his teachers to take these things up with the university. Columbus would never have been able to discover America, if he had turned back from the fury of the waves, or left his ships when they had been badly damaged by months of drifting on the unknown seas. Similarly, Marconi

could never have invented wireless telegraphy, if he had lost patience and thrown off his primitive tools. So, we should take it as a rule of life that we must not lay the blame for our failure on others, or the difficulties that come in the way. There will always be many dangers and difficulties, trials and misfortunes, sorrows and sufferings. But we must overcome them all with our faith and good will. We should remember the inspiring song of Rabindranath Tagore :

\* "I bow to thee, my Pilot !  
As I set sail on the voyage of life.  
Let storms and tempests blow o'er me ;  
I will not turn back in fear  
From the winds and waves in strife."

In a word, we must carry on with our work. And in doing so, we must think of our duty rather than our convenience, our work, rather than our tools. If we are restless and fretful, we shall make ourselves miserable, and irritate even those who are our friends and well-wishers. We shall lose their sympathy by our whining and grumbling over trifles. It is a sign of weakness and cowardice.

That is why a good workman should cultivate some qualities that will help him in doing his duty bravely, calmly, and cheerfully. He must be sincere in his work, and look beyond the present into the future. He must have, above all, abounding self-confidence, resolute courage, firm determination, and cheerful optimism. He must think with the poet,

"Life is real ! Life is earnest !  
And the grave is not its goal."

There is an English proverb, "Keep smiling, never say die." This is a precept which all Englishmen follow in life. That is why they were able to build up a great empire and make England the queen of the seas. And that is why they could stand the terrible air-raids of Germany during the Second World War, and win in the end. There is no doubt that they would have been nowhere but for the help offered by America and the allies. But they would never have been able to win the sympathy of these great nations but for their courage, self-sacrifice, and robust optimism. During the first four years of the war, many people used to think that it was all over with England. But, even in the midst of terrible sufferings, the people of England did not lose heart, hope, or cheerful confidence. And it is due to this that they were able to come out of the war as one of the great free nations of the world.

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\* Translated by the author.

This is a lesson which India should learn at present. She is now in the midst of a sea of troubles. Famine, flood, and earthquake have done their worst. And the partition of their country has created a tremendous refugee problem. Our Prime Minister, himself a man of science, has launched many great schemes for the harnessing of mighty rivers, generating electric power, and developing trade, commerce, and industries. We must stand behind him patiently with courage, confidence, and hope. We must not find fault with the work that is being carried on, or the resources at our disposal. It may appear that our progress is slow, and the people of India are still where they were. But in our moments of darkness and despair, let us listen to the message of hope given to us by a great poet :

"For while the tired waves, vainly breaking,  
Seem here no painful inch to gain,  
Far back, through creeks and inlets making,  
Comes silent, flooding in the main."

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### VISIT OF SOVIET LEADERS TO INDIA

The visit of Soviet leaders is a memorable event in the history of our country. Since the dawn of freedom in India, our Prime Minister, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, has led many a nation of the earth along paths of peace. He has also visited many lands as an honoured guest, and preached the ideals of peace, love, and brotherhood amid the rumblings of war all over the world. A few months ago, he visited Soviet Russia which gave him a splendid welcome. His journey through that country was like a glorious progress from victory to victory.

And to return this cordial visit of our Prime Minister, Mr. Bulganin, the Soviet Prime Minister, and Mr. Khrushchev, the First Secretary of the Communist Party of the U. S. S. R., came to India in November last on a three-week visit to this country.

They reached Delhi, on the 18th November at 2-30 P. M., and were given a splendid welcome by the citizens of that great city. It is estimated that no less than fifty thousand people lined the route from Palam Aerodrome to Rashtrapati Bhavan, where they were guests of the President of India. Delhi wore a gala appearance. Never before in the long history of our country, were so many flags and arches displayed in the Capital of India. The next day, the guests received a civic welcome

from the citizens of Delhi on Ram Lila grounds. They listened to the speeches of the Soviet leaders with rapt attention, and burst into loud cheering when their honoured guests mentioned 'Pancha Shila' or five principles of peace and co-existence preached by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. There Pandit Nehru warmly admired the audience for their patient hearing and wonderful sense of discipline.

At Delhi the distinguished guests laid a wreath on the *Samadhi* of Mahatma Gandhi, and spent much of their time in seeing the Red Fort, Kutub Minar, and *Jantar Mantar*. They also addressed members of both the Houses of Parliament. And everywhere they echoed the ideals of the Mahatma and Pandit Nehru, and promised to help India in the development of her resources and the protection of her independence. From there they went out on a short trip to see the beauty and grandeur of Taj Mahal, and watch the progress made in the construction of the Bhakra Nangal Dam in the Punjab. They were deeply impressed when they viewed this mighty project to control the waters of the Sutlej and use them for the irrigation of millions of acres of land. Mr. Bulganin paid a warm tribute to this glorious venture and said, "It is a great tribute to this new spirit of India."

On the 22nd of November, they were at Bombay, where they received a warm and enthusiastic welcome. They visited many places in this home of industry and saw cloth mills at work. From there they went to Poona, where they were greeted by about a thousand officers and cadets of the National Defence Academy.

On the 26th of November, they visited Bangalore and received a picturesque welcome from the people of the city. At Coimbatore, on their way to Ootacamond, they were garlanded by elephants. And it was equally amusing when they tasted *pan* in Ootacamond.

From Ootacamond the distinguished visitors flew to Madras. There, in the presence of a million people, Mr. Bulganin made a stirring speech, in the course of which he attacked Portugal for her refusal to withdraw from Goa. He condemned the formation of Armed Pacts and Defensive Blocs at the instance of Western Powers like the United Kingdom and America. He said that India had acted wisely in refusing to join these blocs. Mr. Khrushchev also spoke in the same vein and added, "In the defence of your independence, the Soviet Union will be always with you." Mr. Bulganin spoke on this day with great fervour and exclaimed, "Long live the hardworking people of India. Long live peace in the entire world."

On the 29th of November, they reached Calcutta. Here they received the greatest and warmest welcome of their life. They were not only charmed, but also bewildered. Millions of people lined the entire route from Dum Dum Air Port to the Government House. Every inch of space was filled up, and people watched the gorgeous procession from the roofs of houses, tree-tops, and indeed every accessible place near about. Such was the crowd that their car broke down, and they had to pass along the Central Avenue in a police van. Then next day, they were given a civic reception on the Brigade Parade Ground. Hundreds of thousands of people went to hear them. But most of them were sorely disappointed when the speeches of the Soviet leaders were interpreted in Hindi, and not in Bengali, the language of Bengal.

On the first of December, the Soviet leaders arrived in Rangoon, where they were welcomed by vast numbers of men, women, and children. There they visited the most attractive sights, including the great Shwedagon Pagoda. On their return from Burma to India, they landed at Asansole and visited the country's great industrial concerns at Sindri, Chittaranjan, and Jamshedpur. And on completing their tour to these places, the visitors flew to Jaipur where they were warmly welcomed, and many rich presents were made to them by the people of that historic city.

On the ninth December, the two guests visited Kashmir, the Paradise of India. They were impressed by the picturesque loveliness of her scenery—her streams, lawns, gardens, and the gorgeous mountains all around. They also felt quite at home as it was a place so near to the Soviet republics. The tenth of December is a historic day in the annals of India. On that day, they declared that Kashmir was an inalienable part of India. The people of Kashmir, they said, had acceded to India of their own will, through their freely elected Constituent Assembly. They also revealed how the Government of Pakistan tried to dissuade them from visiting Kashmir and Afghanistan. On the 11th they left Kashmir with the words, "We are leaving Kashmir with the feeling as though we are leaving our own land." The next day, they arrived at New Delhi and held conferences with Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru for two days, after which they issued a joint statement, promising mutual aid and pledging to work along the paths of peace. And on the 14th December, they bade a regretful farewell to India and flew to Afghanistan.

Their visit to India will become a part of our history. They were greeted by all sections of the people and all schools of politics—Congress, Communists, and other organizations of the land. We shall remember them for their colourful personalities,

their pledge of peace and goodwill, and their friendly declarations about the government and people of India.

Their friendship and goodwill prove, before all the world, that "peace hath her victories no less renowned than war."

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### PREPAREDNESS FOR WAR IS THE BEST SECURITY OF PEACE

This was the substance of the message of George Washington to his countrymen, when America had won her freedom after years of struggle with the British. In his address to the Congress in 1790, he said, "To be prepared for war is one of the most effectual means of preserving peace." It is the same message that was given, a hundred and fifty years later, by President Franklin D. Roosevelt when Europe was in the throes of the Second World War. He told the people of the United States of America, "We have had the lesson before us over and over again—nations that were not ready and were unable to get ready found themselves overrun by the enemy." This is all the more true today when the world is in the grip of a cold war between America and Russia and their satellites in the East and the West. The two World Wars that swept over Europe and Asia within a little over a quarter of a century had, it seems, left no lessons for humanity. But there were great thinkers and statesmen, who were trying to rid the world of the scourge of war. Among them was President Wilson of America, who conceived the idea of founding the 'League of Nations', that would lift the cloud of war, and make the world safe for democracy. It was agreed that the nations, which joined the organization, would never go to war with one another. And they would always stand united against an enemy that invaded their territories or violated their independence. It looked, for the time being, as if war would be no more. But unfortunately, all these high hopes were dashed to the ground when Japan invaded Manchuria and then China, and Italy grabbed Abyssinia. The League was too weak to deal with these powerful nations when they made war on other countries from purely selfish motives. The only thing it did was to expel Soviet Russia from the League, when she attacked her small neighbour Finland. But the League could do nothing to help the victim. And it tumbled down like a house of cards, when the Second World War broke out. The same fate awaits the United Nations Organisation which was founded on June 26, 1945. It met at Sanfrancisco in the

United States of America, and was attended by the representatives of fifty-one states. Like the League of Nations, it promised to rid the world of war, to stand by the right and liberties of man in every country, and to ensure justice, mutual respect, and toleration among the nations of the world. But it has become the battle-ground of rival powers and done nothing to bring peace to the world. It is dominated by England and the United States of America, and has refused to enlist the People's Republic of China as one of its members. China is represented by the Government of Marshal Chiang Kai Shek in Formosa. This is a piece of absurdity which has shocked almost every civilized nation of the world. Russia is always in the opposition. She has vetoed the resolutions of the United Nations, any number of times, and they have also been defied by the Union of South Africa. So, the United Nations Organisation is only a pompous show, and has no power to do justice or keep peace in the world. America is always pulling the strings from behind, and she is now entering into military alliance with some countries of the East and the West, in order to rally them against Soviet Russia. Moreover, both America and Russia have atomic piles, which they are threatening to hurl against each other every now and then. All these things prove that civilization is crumbling, and war clouds are still hanging on the horizon. That is why, as things stand today, no nation can look on complacently in the midst of rumblings of war on all sides. Even India, vowed to peace and non-violence, has to stand on her guard against the war-mongering nations of the West and their allies in Asia. And this is the reason why, she has to spend about sixty per cent of her revenue for maintaining her army, navy, and air forces. Only a few years ago, she was called upon to defend Kashmir against tribal raids from the frontiers—raids that were engineered by Pakistan. But for her army and navy she would have to stand by as a silent spectator, when the beautiful valley of Kashmir was ravaged and defiled by barbarian hordes from the frontier. She was able to ward off the worst enemies of civilization with her army, aeroplanes, and engineers. It was a campaign which was regarded, all over the world, as one of the most marvellous feats of engineering, aerial flight, and military skill. Since then, the United States of America have been trying, by all means in their power, to incite Pakistan against India. One of the mediators sent by the United Nations openly declared, in his report, that Pakistan was an aggressor in Kashmir. . And yet the countrymen of George Washington and Abraham Lincoln have allied themselves with a theocratic state, which is now ruled, not by a democracy, but a clique dominated by military men. And it has now declared itself as 'The Islamic Republic of

Pakistan.' Possibly, such a thing would not have occurred if America had not elected a military man as her President. On the eve of the last general election in America, President Truman warned his countrymen against the danger of electing a general as the head of the State. And his warning has come true, too, true. America is no longer the home of democracy, but a patron of the cult of violence, autocracy, and religious fanaticism. Indeed, there is no way out of this menace, except preparing ourselves for the worst. We shall stand for peace, and never fire the first shot. But if our motherland is invaded and our honour violated, we must rise and fight to a man to save the government of the people and for the people from the enemies of freedom, open or disguised. We shall go on with the work of peace and happiness in full vigour, develop our agriculture and industries, and carry on with the river valley projects for the happiness and prosperity of our people. But, at the same time, we must always stand prepared to defend our hearths and homes.

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### YOUR IDEAL HEROINE

India is proud of her heroines. The pages of our history shine with the names of Rezia Begum, Rani Durgavati, Chand Sultana, and the Rajput women of old, who leapt into flames to die in defence of their honour and purity. But, to us, Luxmi Bai, Ranees of Jhanshee, is the noblest and most glorious of them all.

Luxmi Bai was born in a Brahmin family of South India. Her father came to Bithur and there served as an officer under the deposed Peshwah, Baji Rao. With him was his motherless daughter, Manu Bai, a pretty little girl of winning manners. She was a healthy and spirited girl too, and used to play with two boys of the Peshwah's family. They were Nana Saheb, the adopted son of the Peshwa, and Rai Saheb, his nephew. Baji Rao loved this girl like his own daughter and taught her riding, fencing, and other manly exercises fit for a soldier's life. At the same time, she was very fond of learning. It is said that, in her childhood, she used to dress herself like a *Ranees*, while playing with her companions. And we are told that a famous astrologer once looked at her horoscope and remarked that the girl would become a *Ranees* in the fulness of time. Her father did not believe it, but it came true, too true, in the years to be.

In those days, child marriage was in vogue among the Marhattas. So, the father of the beautiful girl began to look for a bridegroom for his daughter, who was only eight years old at the time. There was, however, a difficulty in the way, as the groom must be a Brahmin of the same sect. Just at this time, Gangadhar Rao, the Rajah of Jhansee, lost his first wife. He was a Brahmin of the same order and was looking for a bride. An astrologer brought this news to Bithur. So, he was sent to the court of Gangadhar Rao, with a letter from the Peshwa, Baji Rao, warmly commanding the beauty, intelligence, and liveliness of the girl. One of the courtiers of Gangadhar Rao came to see the girl. Gangadhar Rao was simply charmed when he heard of the peerless beauty of the girl, and gave his consent to the marriage at once. And so Manu Bai was married<sup>\*</sup> to the Rajah of Jhansee amid scenes of joy and splendour.

In compliance with an ancient custom among the Marhattas, the girl had to take another name, when she came to her husband's palace. The ladies of the noble family of Jhansee named her Luxmi Bai, for her incomparable beauty and the radiant glow of good fortune in her looks. And this is the name by which she is known now all over the world. Eight years after her marriage, in 1850, Luxmi Bai gave birth to a son, who died after three months. Gangadhar was deeply moved at the death of this little child, and broke down in body and mind. And, after ailing for three long years, he died in 1853. Gangadhar Rao had, however, adopted a son a year before his death. This boy was named Damodar Rao.

Gangadhar Rao had informed the British Government in time that he had adopted a son to keep up his line. But Lord Dalhousie, the then Governor General of India, did not approve of this adoption. This was a flagrant violation of a treaty, concluded between the British Government and Gangadhar's ancestor, Ramchandra Rao, long ago—a treaty by which it was agreed that the rulership of the State would vest in the heirs of Ramchandra who would be recognized and respected from generation to generation. This was an act of grave injustice that Luxmi Bai strongly resented. For about three years after the death of Gangadhar Rao, Luxmi Bai led an austere life in praying, fasting, and worshipping gods and goddesses. We are told that she left her bed at about 4 o' clock in the morning, took her bath in fresh, cold water, wore a silk saree, and went on with her prayers and worship till about 8 o'clock. After that, she heard devotional songs, and the reading of holy books by the learned pundits of her court.

When all these were over, she dressed herself in the robes of a heroine and rode along her palace grounds on a spirited

horse. This was followed by giving audience to her people, and considering their complaints, petitions, and prayers. And after finishing her day's duties, she used to retire for sleep at about midnight. Yet, in the midst of her manifold duties, she was always cool, calm, and considerate. It was the cruelty, injustice, and tyranny of the British Raj, that compelled her to take up arms in defence of her rights. She was always faithful to the British Government, but they misunderstood her and turned a loyal subject into a fiery rebel.

In the year 1857, the Sepoy Mutiny broke out and plunged the whole country into horror and violence. It was the direct result of the high-handed policy of Lord Dalhousie, who had ruled India with an iron hand, and wrested the territories of many princes, on the plea of misgovernment. He had also taken very severe steps against a large number of sepoys and Indian officers who had fallen under the shadow of suspicion. Be it remembered that some of these sepoys were hanged after the mockery of a trial. And his crowning act of insolence was the way in which he deposed Wajid Ali Shah, the Nawab of Oudh.

The mutiny broke out at Meerut, and spread to Delhi, Kanpur, Bengal, and many other provinces. It turned, in the course of a few months, into a war of liberation against the alien rulers of India. The sepoys committed many acts of violence in their fury and lust for revenge. They killed some of their English commanders, and massacred a large number of English men, women, and children at Kanpur. Their leaders were Nana Saheb, the adopted son of the deposed Peshwa, and a young Marbatta Brahmin named Tantia Tope. Luxmi Bai was a pious lady, and she was not involved in this orgy of violence and bloodshed. There are some Englishmen who have charged her with treachery and violence, but they have no evidence for this libel on a great name. This will be clear from the letter of an Englishman, named Martin, who was sheltered by Luxmi Bai in her palace at Jhansee, during the dark days of the mutiny. In a letter to Damodar Rao, Mr. Martin writes, "She sent *Kharests* to Col. Erskine at Jubbulpore and Col. Fraser at Agra, which I gave with my own hand." Indeed, she had asked the English Commanders at Jhansee to leave the city and seek shelter at Datia. But her words were unheeded and, acting on false reports, the British Government suspected that she had joined the rebels.

Fate compelled her to take the help of rebels when Jhansee was invaded and sacked by British soldiers, who robbed the city, and killed thousands of its inhabitants. Luxmi Bai defended the city like an angel. She led her soldiers, organized measures of defence, rode on horseback from end to end of the city, and kept night-long vigils over the enemy. In this way she defended

the fort of Jhansee for about a month, and defied the might of British arms. Indeed, Jhansee may be regarded as the Marathon of India.

When the invincible fort of Jhansee, on the crest of a high hill, fell to the enemy, she rode off to Gwalior and joined hands with Nana Saheb and Bai Saheb, her companions of childhood. Here Rai Saheb did not trust her with the charge of a large army. She commanded a small wing with about three hundred soldiers. Her own favourite horse died on the battlefields of Gwalior, and she took a spirited steed from the royal stable. When Gwalior fell, she rode off at full speed, and could have easily evaded the enemy. But her horse shied before a canal and stumbled. Yet, she fought, single-handed, with her sword against a band of British soldiers who were following her. One of them struck her on the right side of her head with his sword. Possibly this soldier is not to blame, as 'the Ranees was dressed in the uniform of a cavalry officer, led charge after charge, and was killed among those who resisted to the last.' Even in her dying moments, she told one of her devoted attendants to see that her sacred body might not fall into the hands of her enemies. And with a last longing look at her son, she died. Her body was cremated by some of her faithful followers amid a pile of hay set on fire.

Her heroism has been admired even by her worst enemies. Sir Hugh Rose wrote in his general order, that 'the best man on the side of the enemies was the woman found dead, "the Ranees of Jhansee." She passed away at the age of twenty-three in a blaze of glory. Colonel Malleson writes of her, "Whatever her faults in the British eye may have been, her countrymen will ever remember that she was driven by ill-treatment into rebellion, and that she lived and died for her country."

Thus vanishes from the page the finest, noblest, and bravest of the women who adorn the long annals of our motherland.

After long years of struggle, India has won her freedom. Great and gallant men have fought and died for her glory. So, it was quite in the fitness of things that Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose organized a women's regiment in his Indian National Army, named after the Ranees of Jhansee of undying fame. It is now our sacred duty, not only to adore her great name, but also to emulate her heroism and glorious self-sacrifice. Empires may rise and empires may fall, but the memory of Luxmi Bai, Ranees of Jhansee, will live for ever.

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## LINGUISTIC STATES IN INDIA

One of the bonds of unity among the ancient Greeks was their common language. A state can progress fairly, quickly, and peacefully only when the vast majority of its people speak the same language. They can unite and build up a common ideal for the social, intellectual, and economic advancement of the state. That is why, in a vast country like ours, there is a cry for reorganizing the states on the basis of language. The British ruled over India for about two hundred years. They did not care much for the economic and cultural development of the country. Their policy was to 'divide and rule'. That is why they created provinces in which there were many kinds of people, speaking different languages, with habits, manners, and customs peculiar to each. They desired, first and foremost, to maintain law and order, so that they might be able to rule over India for ever. In those days, Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, and Chotanagpur were governed by a single Lieutenant Governor, with four secretaries. Bengal was then the leader of the rest of India. Her sons won glory and fame in all directions—arts, letters, sciences, and indeed in all the learned professions of the day. That is why most of the high officials of the government were Bengalees. But the other people who had been tagged on to Bengal—the Biharis, the Oriyas, and the Santhals—were very backward in every sphere.

In 1912, Bihar and Orissa were made into a separate province. And, true to their time-old policy, the British government transferred vast tracts of Bengali-speaking areas to Bihar. The Indian National Congress protested against it, and demanded that the districts of Manbhum and Singhbhum should be returned to Bengal. Since then the Congress has declared, from year to year, that the provinces of India should be re-formed on a linguistic basis. But all this has been upset by the partition of India—an act of sacrilege for which we are more responsible than the Muslims led by Mr. Mohammad Ali Jinnah. At the instance of an eminent leader of South India, the Congress gave its consent to the division of India on the basis of religion. This was a 'Himalayan blunder' for which the people of India will have to suffer for long.

Be that as it may, since the dawn of freedom the leaders of India are singing in another tune. They have gone back on their pledges, and some of them are crying hoarse to prove that 'linguistic provinces' will hamper the unity of India. They tried to stifle the voice of the people of Andhra when they demanded a province of their own. It was only after a terrible outburst of mob violence, and the death of one her leaders by fasting, that the Government of India yielded, and the new Andhra State was

created. There can be no doubt that it is a belated act of justice, which will bring peace and prosperity to the Telegu-speaking people who live in this part of India. Here a contented people will unite and put their shoulders to the wheel to develop their rich literature, give education to their children, encourage arts and crafts, and harness the waters of their great rivers to the service of agriculture and industries.

It is the same story with West Bengal. Bengal has lost about two-thirds of her territories. Thanks to the partition of India, hundreds and thousands of Hindus in East Bengal have left their hearths and homes and come to West Bengal for protection. The latest figures of this exodus prove that about 40 to 50 lacs of people from East Bengal have migrated to West Bengal. Moreover, the influx is still continuing on a rapid scale. It is beyond the power of the Government of West Bengal to help these poor and penniless men and women, and give them food, shelter, and means to live. The Government of India are helping them with funds. But it is a very big and serious problem, and very little has been done so far. So, it will be of great help to West Bengal, if the Bengali-speaking areas of Bihar are returned to her. The Congress will redeem its pledge, if the government agrees to this reasonable proposal. It will give peace and contentment to the Bengalees living in Bihar. It will help their cultural development, and it will enable the Government of West Bengal to solve the refugee problem, to a considerable extent.

After years of waiting and watching, the Government of India decided to appoint a High Power Commission to deal with this problem. It was surely the duty of this commission to redistribute the boundaries of states in the light of these events. The Commission has tendered its report, which has been modified by the Government of India in some respects. It has followed one principle in redistributing the states of South India, and another in framing the states of the North. And their resolution to tear off Bombay from Maharashtra and place it under central administration, is one of the most amazing things ever known. It has been condemned by a cool-headed statesman like Pundit Hridaynath Kunzru, and led to the resignation of Mr. Desamukh, the able Finance Minister of India. Indeed, it has led to serious disturbances in Orissa, Bombay, and some other places. To avoid these troubles, the Government are now urging the creation of bilingual states. This has been strongly resented by vast millions of people in West Bengal, and the Government of India have not yet made a final decision.

There are bigots who tell us that linguistic provinces will break up national unity. But to our mind, it will dispel mutual jealousy and distrust, and help to develop the arts, industries,

language, and literature of every province. It will also bring about peace and harmony among the varied peoples of this vast country. But many of our ultra-patriotic leaders forget that this is the very essence of a federal government and, after all, we are all loyal to the Indian Union and the Indian Parliament. It is they who will direct the policy of the whole union, and bring peace, happiness, and prosperity to the people of India. The creation of linguistic provinces is only a reorganization of the states in the light of their culture, manners, customs, and economic needs.

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### NATIONAL DEFENCE

India is now a free country. She is no longer protected by the army, navy, and air forces of the British Empire. It is time for her to think of defending the country on land, sea, and air on all sides. For this it is most essential to build up a strong army of young men, who will rise and fight for their country, whenever she is threatened by a foreign power. She has to build up a strong navy, manned with thousands of young sailors serving under admirals and naval officers of outstanding personality. She has to organize an air-force that will watch over our vast coast-lines and chase our enemies. The Government of India are now quite alert to the needs of our country. India is spending tons of money for importing modern arms and equipments, and giving a good training to her soldiers and sailors. Her soldiers have distinguished themselves in defending the valley of Kashmir against raiders from the frontiers. The manner in which India organized the defence of Kashmir by sending soldiers and military stores by air over the Himalays, is always regarded as one of the most wonderful feats of heroism in modern times. What is more, it is the Indian army that has given the light of freedom to the people of Kashmir.

It has been said that India is free from the risk of foreign invasion. It is only Pakistan that ever thinks of leading an army against India, but she will not dare to do so for fear of international complications. This is true to a certain extent. 'But to be forearmed is to be forewarned'. If we think of the trend of world politics now-a-days, we shall find that attempts are being made, directly or indirectly, to incite Pakistan against India. It is with this object in view that England and America are trying to turn Kashmir into a cockpit of political intrigue. America's military aid to Pakistan is a grave menace to the peace and security of India. Her membership of the South East Asia Treaty Organization, and signing the Bagdad Pact are the latest

moves in this direction. The affairs of Korea are another example of this vile intrigue.

So, the government should never listen to the cry of those who tell us that there is no need of spending vast sums of money over the defence of the country. The government, they think, should spend the best part of their revenues over nation-building projects. We admit that these great projects for the irrigation of lands, fertilizing the soil, and electrification and extension of industries are also some of the surest means of national defence. They will increase the wealth and resources of the country and bring peace, plenty, and happiness to the toiling millions of India. They will enable the government to spend much more for the improvement of the army, navy, and air forces. But we shall do well to remember that there is always the need of a strong army to defend the country, a powerful fleet to guard the long coast-line of India, and an immense air force that will keep ceaseless vigil over her enemies in the East and the West. For this funds must be found and, to our mind, plenty of money may be released for this purpose, if the cost of administration is lowered and brought down to the level of our country's resources. We hear that the cost of general administration in united and undivided India under British rule was about seventy-six crores of rupees. And we find that, under the Union of India, it has risen to about three hundred and thirty crores. It is the ruinous cost of administration that is retarding the progress of the country to a large extent.

India is well protected by Nature. She is guarded by lofty mountain ranges in the north and north-west, and boundless seas in her east, west, and south. But now-a-days we have to think of the kingdom of air and the menace of atom and hydrogen bombs. We should be prepared for all these with the help of our scientists and naval and military officers. Our men of science must give much of their time to the problem of defence. They should harness the best of their talents and energies to the service of the country. And the best defence of them all is the loyalty and devotion of the sons and daughters of India. The true defence of the country is in the hearts of the people.

We should remember that national defence is not only the duty of the government, but also of the people. The true nation dwells in cottages. It is not made of a few politicians, who adorn the high offices of the state. The vast millions of India must be educated, trained, and organized for the defence of the country. Military schools should be set up, side by side, with our schools and colleges, and every student must receive a course of compulsory military training. He should be not only a scholar but also a soldier of liberty. Those who are denied the light of education, must be trained to work in their homes. Their services should be utilized for the development of spinning,

weaving, and many other forms of cottage industries. We should remember that the great watch-making industry of Switzerland is a cottage industry. These industries will be as helpful to us in meeting our supplies in times of war as the army and the navy. One of the greatest problems during war is the problem of feeding and clothing the army, and supplying military stores.

Then we may organize volunteer corps in every city, town, and village, all over India. They will, along with their duties in civil life, receive military training, and be prepared to rally round our national flag in times of peril. They will be our own militia, who will bear their own arms, when the time comes.

But we should bear in mind that national defence is a great thing. It means organization and all-round progress in every sphere—army, navy, air-forces, science, agriculture, irrigation, industries, and indeed everything needed for the defence of the country.

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### THE ARMY IN FREE INDIA

Before India was free, our British rulers divided the people of this country into martial and non-martial races. They used to recruit Indian soldiers from among the Sikhs, Gurkhas, Pathans, and Jats. The bulk of the army came from England and all the commanders and generals were Europeans. The English had no faith in the highly cultured people of Bombay, Bengal, Madras, or the United Provinces. During the First World War, they maintained a University Corps. But the officers and members of the corps were never sent to the theatres of war. After the war, they were kept up more for show than for service. They had to camp for a month or two for training, and their only duty was to dance attendance on Governors and Viceroys and join ceremonial parades. Their officers—colonels and majors—were carpet-knights without any military duties at all.

The dawn of freedom in India has changed all this. The regular land forces have been completely Indianized, all distinctions between martial and non-martial races has been abolished, and each and every rank of the army has now been thrown open to Indians. The navy is no doubt still commanded by British officers, but the time is not far off when the entire military personnel will be Indianized. And with this object in view, military academies have been opened for the training of officers on British lines. During British rule, India was guarded by a mercenary army. It had no interest in the country, and fought only for wages and rewards. But the army that defends India today is a national army.

There are cranks, here and there, who pose as followers of Gandhism. They declare their faith in non-violence and tell us that India need have no standing army. These people forget that the Mahatma never encouraged cowardice. He told the people of India not to fight against any other country for gain or ambition. He asked them to be non-violent in the sense that they must forgive and forget, as far as it is humanly possible for them to do so. He called upon them not to covet other people's riches, powers, or possessions. Their duty, he thought, was to protect and develop what God had given them. Moreover, he has always advised us to stand and fight against violence. That is why he approved the action of the Government of India in resisting tribal raids on Kashmir. It is a matter for rejoicing that the Government of India have never listened to the advice of these craven-hearted apostles of non-violence. There is no doubt that India spends almost half the revenues of the state over her military, naval, and air forces, but there is no help. India must be prepared to defend herself at a time when war clouds are hanging over the world. She must train up and maintain a highly mechanised army. She must know that to be forearmed is to be forewarned. Her amiable neighbours are crying for *Jehad* in season and out of season. In the north of the country are two mighty powers whose policies and movements are most uncertain. And her relations with South Africa are as bitter as ever. The Middle East is on the brink of a volcano, which may burst at any time. That is why India must be fully equipped to defend her hard-won freedom. 'Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty'. So, she has done well to form a large territorial force, that will help the regular army in guarding the frontiers of India.

The army has also provided employment to many of our graduates. They are being trained as ground-engineers for the air forces, and technicians whose services are always needed for the mechanised army of modern times. There are also a fairly large number of medical graduates working in the army and the navy.

In modern times, the services of the army are needed, not only in times of war, but also in other fields of work. Under the inspiring guidance of General Cariappa, our soldiers have rendered splendid service to the country in times of flood, famines, earthquakes, and other ravages of nature. They have helped the people in clearing roads, growing food-crops, and organizing defence parties. They have also helped the civil powers in quelling disturbances and maintaining order. They distinguished themselves on the battlefields of Europe during the two World Wars. What is more, they won undying glory among the mountain defiles of Kashmir, when that lovely

country was raided by wild tribes from the frontiers. The name of Brigadier Osman, who died in the defence of his motherland, will be remembered with love and gratitude by the sons of India from age to age. He was a hero, whose glorious memory reminds us of Rana Pratap Singh of Mewar. He is one of those patriots who prove, before all the world, that India is a secular state, where men of all faiths may live in peace and harmony, and rise to the highest offices of the state by merit and diligence. In a word, we must remember that a nation, rich in courage and strong in arms, is respected all over the world. This was the position of Japan at the outbreak of the Second World War, and it was her misguided ambition and inordinate love of power that brought about her downfall. That is why, once again, Japan is organizing her army and navy in rebuilding and reorganizing the state on democratic lines.

We should bear in mind that our freedom is in peril. The English made a great gift, when they granted freedom to India. But they robbed this glorious gift of its grace, when they created Pakistan, and sowed seeds of discord among her people. There are also foreign enclaves in India that have become cockpits of political intrigue. We have to guard against all this and keep the flag of freedom flying. That is why India must have a strong and powerful army, and military training should be made compulsory in the higher forms of our school, and the colleges affiliated to the university. Every able-bodied young man must give an hour or two to military training everyday. It is a healthy and manly exercise. In a word, every student should look upon himself as a soldier of India. The youths of today are the rulers of tomorrow, and so they must be active, intelligent, well-educated, hardy, and strong.

The people of India are not wanting in love, charity, and feeling of brotherhood. They will never quarrel with other nations, or fire the first shot. But they should surely be strong in defending their country against violence. This is the true spirit in which a nation must be organized. The cry of non-violence is, more often than not, a canard and a cloak for cowardice.

Let us, therefore, unite in building a strong and powerful nation, full of the spirit of suffering, sacrifice, and love of liberty. We shall always yield to reason and be kind and tolerant to our neighbours. But the freedom of the country is the first and foremost thing to each and every citizen of India. And that freedom can never be maintained by shouting slogans and making speeches. Let us all work, in love and faith, for the glory of our motherland.

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## NEW OPENINGS FOR MEN AND WOMEN IN FREE INDIA

The most important problem of free India is to find new openings for her men and women. The problem of unemployment is very acute in almost every country. But nowhere else is it so pressing as in India. India is a vast country of many peoples, religions, languages, habits and customs. But the great majority of these men are steeped in the darkness of ignorance and poverty. The crying need of India is to find employment for them.

Education is spreading among the people, and large numbers of graduates are coming out of our universities every year. These young men go about knocking at preferment's door in vain. It is beyond the power of the central or any state government to absorb all these young, intelligent, and educated people. That is why, in almost every civilized country in the West, very few of the students coming out of school, join the university for higher education. It is only the sons of noble families or highly talented boys who go in for university education. All of them read up to the Matriculation or School Final Standard and acquire the elements of knowledge in a number of subjects. With this background they go out to their fields of work, and the vast majority of them are apprenticed to commercial and industrial houses, or to engineering firms, and the like. They are also trained for arts and crafts. This enables them to earn their living and work for the good of the country. And from among them have risen men who, by their talent, industry, and devotion, have risen to high places in public life. Some of them have also become great leaders or merchant princes in the fulness of time. The lives of Henry Ford or Aneurin Bevan are inspiring examples of such a life.

The same principle should be followed in our country. It is the duty of the State to provide free and compulsory education to boys and girls of tender age, so that there may not be a single illiterate man in the country in the near future. When these boys and girls have left their primary schools, they should be helped and encouraged to read in High Schools and pass their Matriculation or School Final Examination. It must be remembered at all times that at least an elementary knowledge of a number of subjects, like language, history, mathematics, geography, science, and hygiene, is needed for work in any sphere of life. But thus far and no further for most of our boys and girls. It is simply cruel to send them to college and drill them for university examinations at the risk of failure, distress, and disappointment.

But there were many difficulties in the way, so long as India was under foreign rule. Almost the whole of our trade, commerce, and industries were in the hands of foreigners. They employed Indians mostly as labourers or office clerks. And even this gave employment to only a few thousands among the teeming millions of India. That is why parents and guardians had to send their wards to the university as there was no other way out.

But now India is free. Our trade and commerce are yet largely in the hands of foreigners. Yet, we should compel them to invest their capital in India and employ Indians, not only for labour and clerical work, but also for high offices in their establishments. Moreover, they should train our young Matriculates in industries, and make them fit for becoming useful members of society.

Then there is another sphere in which our young men should feel deeply interested. They should bear in mind that the world is now in the throes of a great revolution and deadly conflicts among nations that boast of their culture and civilization. Indeed, most of the nations of Europe seem to be reeling into the dark days of barbarism. We must be prepared to defend the honour, glory, and hard-earned freedom of our country. So it is now time for every Indian to receive military training. The distinction made by our British rulers between martial and non-martial races is gone. The government should not miss a single moment in giving compulsory military training to our young men all over the country. Many of them may choose the army or the navy as a career, and the great majority of them should join the territorial army for the defence of our motherland.

The Government should also employ these young men in relief works, and for carrying out their schemes for the scientific, agricultural, and industrial development of the country. The Five Year Plan should take the fullest advantage of the energy, industry, and spirit of service among our young men. The idea of employing many thousands of our young men as teachers of primary schools is really original and excellent. It will give them bread and enable them to learn the noble art of teaching. There are also the great Community Projects, which may enlist the services of many thousands of young men who are willing to earn their bread by honest labour.

And last of all, there is one thing which should be avoided by the government in the best interests of the country. Since independence, a large number of retired government servants are being reappointed to public services on grounds of wisdom, experience, and efficiency. But this is a grave injustice to our talented young graduates, whose number is legion. They are eminently qualified for those services, and are much more energetic than the

old men who are being patronized by the government for reasons, about which the less said the better. They are being paid salaries and allowances which were beyond the dreams of their forbears during British rule. The policy of the government in this respect has been creating discontent among our young men, some of whom are turning communists in despair. The government should realize that this is one of the surest ways of spreading communism in the country. Exceptions can be made in the case of technical experts. But surely the gentlemen who have grown grey in civil services may make room for brilliant young men with energy, vision, and courage of conviction.

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### BROADCASTING

Many and varied are the inventions of modern science. But the most wonderful and important of them all is the radio, with all its facilities for broadcasting.

The term 'broadcasting' is used in wireless telegraphy to indicate the sending out of wireless messages, concerts, and the like, to be heard by those who have radio sets to receive them. The world is fast shrinking. Today we can hear, on the radio, a speech made by a great orator in America, England, or Russia. We can hear songs sung by men and women living in countries, thousands of miles away, beyond the seas. And it seems really very strange to us when we think that this miracle is done by means of electrical waves, without the medium of wires. It is, therefore, most interesting to learn how this great discovery was made.

We should feel proud to know that a great Indian—Sir Jagadish Chandra Bose—was one of the pioneers of wireless telegraphy. Three master-minds of the last century—Dr. Hertz of Germany, Prof. Marconi of Bologna University, and Sir Jagadish Chandra Bose of Bengal—were thinking deeply over the problem of sending electric signals, through waves of ether rolling over space. But it was Sir Jagadish who demonstrated it, for the first time, in Calcutta. As far back as 1895, before an assembly of learned men presided over by the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal, he sent an ether wave through a solid wall, and made it displace a heavy weight, ring a bell, and burst a little mine set up in a closed room. He could not, however, make further progress for want of facilities. And it was left to Marconi, the Italian Engineer, to make the wireless a lively means of communication between man and man, from end to end of the world. In 1899, he sent wireless messages across

the English Channel to the wonder of all the world. And three years later, in 1902, he succeeded in sending messages across the Atlantic. Then he established a wireless public telegraph service, over the Atlantic, in 1907.

Attempts to broadcast sounds received on the radio commenced as early as 1919, when the Marconi Company began to send messages from their radio station at Chelmsford. In 1920, permission was given to set up a radio station for entertainment and educational purposes, and at first only a short programme was given once a week. In May, 1922, the Marconi Company began to broadcast a programme of speech and music from Marconi House, London. And on October 18, 1922, was established the British Broadcasting Company, which developed later into the British Broadcasting Corporation. Since then, broadcasting has been extended, developed, and perfected in such a way that it has become a power among the great nations of the world. It has reached such a stage of perfection that, in 1927, Colonel Lindbergh broadcast the story of his aviation to all the world through a long chain of stations, linked by about thirty thousand miles of long distance telephone wire. Today there are radio stations all over the world that broadcast news, views, songs, and speeches, to which everyone may listen over his wireless set.

Broadcasting has become a pleasant family recreation. It is a treat to listen to interesting radio programmes after the day's hard work in offices, law courts, hospitals, and centres of trade and commerce. It is a great relief to many of us to hear a song sung by a good musician, or listen to an interesting speech made by a great orator. We may as well enjoy theatricals on the radio. And radio has advanced so far that we can not only hear the voices, but also see the pictures of men and women who are thousands of miles away. This flashing of pictures on the radio is known as television, which is regarded as one of the miracles of science.

But the radio is not only a source of amusement, but also of instruction and education. Many of our people have not the time to read or learn many things. But they can acquire much knowledge of art, literature, and science, if they listen to radio programmes everyday. Again, the radio is now used by the ships in the high seas, air-pilots, and men in charge of meteorological observatories. It can give and receive timely signals of rains, storms, and tempests. It can also give us information about floods, earthquakes, and ravages of war. It is used extensively in war time, when politicians on both sides tell elegant lies at the top of their voice. It has been rightly observed that truth is the first casualty of war. Dr. Goebbels,

one of Hitler's redoubtable lieutenants, silenced the people of Germany by his radio-broadcasts. Such a thing may help to prolong a war, but it demoralizes a whole nation. The peace it brings to the country is the peace of the grave. It deludes vast millions of men and women with false hopes, and lulls them into a sense of security in the midst of grave danger all around.

The radio has many defects, which should be remedied as early as possible. One of these is the broadcasting of frivolous songs and theatricals. These should never find place in radio programmes. Here in India, the radio is often used by the central government and the states. Through the radio they address the people and air their views. Indeed, it is used as a forum by the governments of India and the States. They use it everyday, and important items of news may be held up by orders of the powers that be in what they consider to be the interests of the state.

Again, the radio is used for advertisements in countries like America, Ceylon, and Australia. The radio is not within the reach of many people, as it is really a very costly thing for the vast masses of poor people in India. That is why a large number of radio stations should be set up all over India. And every village should have its radio-sets, for listening to interesting news, speeches, and songs from all parts of India. This can teach them many interesting things and make them curious to learn more. It may also give them an idea of wind and weather, which will do good to agriculture, their chief means of livelihood.

To our mind, there should be committees of learned men and musicians, in every State, to select radio programmes. If this is done, the radio will be a real blessing to all classes of men.

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## INDIAN CONSTITUTION AND ITS WORKING

For thousands of years in the long history of mankind, there were no restraints on the power of kings and emperors who ruled just as they liked. There were no laws or principles by which the states of ancient times were governed. There were no doubt good kings in the East and the West, who were kind and generous to their people. But, after all, they were benevolent despots and were often succeeded by men who were cruel and selfish to the core. Most of the ancient Hindu kings were good rulers and they were guided by their faith in God and the religion of their ancestors. They had also learned ministers and advisers to guide them in the work of administration. They lived, worked, and

died for the good of their people and the honour and freedom of their motherland. But there were really no laws by which their government was regulated from age to age. That is why there arose among them, from time to time, kings who were devils in the guise of men.

Then came the Muslim kings whose will was law. They were followed by the British who ruled over India for about two hundred years. For long years, they ruled wisely and well, and made many laws for the good of the country. They established law and order in the midst of chaos and anarchy, and gave some powers to the people of India to govern themselves. But this was done very slowly and cautiously. And they tried to stifle the spirit of democracy in the people of India by creating independent princely states, setting up communal electorates, and giving to them legislative councils elected on the basis of a very narrow and limited franchise. And they never allowed the people of India to frame their own constitution.

In every free country, the constitution, defining the principles of government, is drawn up by the elected representatives of the people. These men form an assembly, known as the Constituent Assembly, which frames laws, and lays down the principles by which the administration of the country is carried on. America, France, Canada, and the dominions of the British Empire made their constitutions long ago. England has also a constitution, but it is mostly unwritten. It has grown out of time-old conventions that are respected by one and all. England is still governed by a king with wide powers. But such is the convention that the king never acts except on the advice of his ministers. That is why there is a legal maxim, 'The king can do no wrong'. The House of Commons controls national finance, and this is a real curb on the powers of the king.

It was in August, 1947, that India became a free state. The elected representatives of her people formed a Constituent Assembly. And after about two years of consultation, conference, and detailed discussion, it drew up a constitution on the 26th day of November, 1949. And it was inaugurated on January 26, 1950, which has since then been known as the Republic Day.

The preamble of this Constitution declares that the Sovereign Democratic Republic of India will secure for all its citizens 'justice, social, political, and economic; liberty of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship; equality of status and opportunity.' These are the basis of the Fundamental Rights guaranteed to every citizen of India. Economic equality is yet a distant dream in our country, but the government are trying their best to give equal economic opportunities to all.

There are no longer any special privileges for great mercantile firms of British or other European nationalities. The government have removed social disabilities, and the Constitution permits everyone to have his own political or religious beliefs. The Constitution not only assures the freedom of speech, writing, movement, association, and religious faith, but also the right to seek remedies for the violation of any one of them. Again, a citizen has the right to property, and his own culture and system of education. That is why the Government of Bombay have not been allowed by the Supreme Court of India to thrust Hindi down the throats of the students of Anglo-Indian Schools. The Supreme Court has declared that these schools have the right to choose their own medium of instruction.

Over and above these Fundamental Rights, are certain directive principles of State Policy. They have been embodied in Article 39 of the Constitution. It lays down that every State should guarantee to its citizens adequate means of livelihood, distribution of material resources, and equal pay for equal work. There are also directives for the organisation of village panchayet, uniform Civil Code for all India, and Free and Compulsory Primary Education within ten years. Moreover, they are intended to protect the backward communities and settle all disputes, national or international, by negotiation and arbitration.

India is a Union of States which have been divided into three classes. The part 'A' states are Bombay, Madras, Bihar, Orissa, East Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, and West Bengal. Part 'B' states are Hyderabad, Jammu and Kashmir, PEPSU, Rajasthan, Saurashtra, Travancore-Cochin, Madhya Bharat, and Mysore. Then come the Part 'C' states that include Coorg, Bilaspur, Ajmer, Himachal Pradesh, Vindhya Pradesh, Delhi, and Tripura. The report of the States Reorganisation Commission, appointed by the Government, has recommended the abolition of these distinctions between States and States. The Indian Constitution is federal, and has three legislative lists. The Union List includes subjects over which the Central Government have complete control. Then comes the States List, which is entirely under the jurisdiction of the States. And there is the Concurrent List controlled both by the States and the Central Government. But we should do well to remember that the Central Government have overriding powers over the Concurrent List.

The Indian Constitution is modelled on that of America. There are two Houses of Parliament—the House of the People with a maximum of five hundred members, and the Council of State of two hundred and fifty members, twelve of whom are nominated by the President. These houses are now called 'Loka Sabha' and 'Rajya Sabha'. The President is the head of the State. He

is chosen by the elected members of the Houses of Parliament, and of the Legislative Assemblies of the States, sitting jointly. He holds office for five years and may be re-elected at the end of this period. He is the head of the government and exercises the prerogative of mercy and pardon to any offender, but he acts on the advice of his ministers.

The President is also the chief of the executive. He appoints the Governors of the States, the Ministers of the Central Government, the Attorney General for India, the Comptroller and Auditor General, the judges of the Supreme and High Courts, the members of the Union Public Service Commission, and some other high officials.

He has also legislative powers. He can summon and prorogue the legislature and address and send messages to members of both the Houses of Parliament. No bill relating to taxes, in which the States are interested, may be introduced in Parliament without his previous sanction. And no bill passed by the Houses of Parliament will become an Act without his assent. He can also veto any bill but, as the head of a constitutional government, he does not exercise this power given by law. He can send back any bill to the legislature for reconsideration, and issue ordinances in cases of emergency when the Parliament is not sitting. These ordinances will have the force of law till the end of six weeks from the date on which the Parliament reassembles. The Parliament may, however, extend the period by a resolution. The budget estimates of the Union are placed before the Houses of Parliament in the name of the President. And, last of all, he can assume all the powers of the government by declaring an emergency. By the exercise of this power, he can suspend the constitution in any state of India in times of emergency, and place it in the hands of the governor, who may appoint advisers to help him.

There is also a Vice-President for India, who is elected by both the Houses of Parliament. He must possess all the qualifications required for the office of the President. He will normally preside over the sessions of the Council of State or 'Rajya Sabha'. He will also act as the President of the Indian Union when the President dies or resigns. And he will hold this office until a new President is elected.

There is a Legislative Assembly in every State, of which the Chief Minister is the leader. Some of the States have a Second Chamber, consisting of members elected on a very narrow franchise. These assemblies make laws affecting the interests of the States.

Let us now see how the Constitution of India is working. In January, 1952, there was a General Election in India on adult franchise. It was the largest experiment in democracy ever seen

in any country of the world. The elections were won by the Indian National Congress, whose leaders were running the government. And, on the whole, they were carried out smoothly and efficiently. But soon after the elections, some actions taken by the government gave a rude shock to men who loved and respected the ideal of democracy. One of these was the appointment of some gentlemen as ministers who had been defeated heavily at the polls. There is no question about their talent or patriotism. And the Constitution allows a member of the Upper House to become a minister of a State or the Indian Union. But it does not surely contemplate that a man, who has been heavily defeated in a general election, should be appointed a minister in charge of an important portfolio. Even Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru could not justify these things. We have not heard of any person in England, who was raised to the peerage after his defeat in general election, and then appointed a member of the cabinet. Such a thing would violate the spirit, if not the letter, of a democratic constitution. The Constitution has also been amended, from time to time, to legalise the election of some members of parliament, to curb the powers of the courts, and to restrain a citizen's fundamental right to private property in the interests of the State. All these measures have created an unfavourable impression on the public mind. We have no doubt that the government have been inspired by the best of motives. But we feel that, in the earliest stage, a democratic government is sure to be attended with some risks. Yet, these are risks that are worth taking in nurturing an infant democracy. We shall then be able to learn through mistakes, as no man can learn to swim unless he dares to go into water. This is the way in which we shall be able to build up an ideal democracy in the fulness of time. And as citizens of India, it is our duty to watch, in faith and hope, the progress of democracy in our beloved motherland. We must never be indifferent to our duties, and remember that eternal vigilance is the price of liberty.

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### FLOODS—THEIR CAUSES AND REMEDIES

India is a land of many rivers. They are in spate when there is heavy rainfall among the mountains. At that time, they are swollen with water, and come rushing down on the plains below. The result is that vast areas of land go under water, and thousands of men, women, and children suffer miserably. Floods are also caused by the rising of river beds, due to earthquakes or the gathering of silt at the bottom. In some countries the melting of snows and ice-fields, among the mountains

in summer, sends down vast quantities of water into the rivers below, that overflow their banks and flood the country round.

But in India floods are caused generally by too much of rainfall among the mountains. Bihar and the eastern part of Uttar Pradesh are at the foot of the Himalayas. And so is Assam, parts of which are at the base of Kamrup, Khasia, and Jayanti Hills. That is why when there is abnormal rainfall among the mountains, many of the districts in these regions go down under vast sheets of water stretching to the horizon, and the furious currents of the rivers in spate sweep everything on the way. At times whole townships, villages, and cities are eroded by the waters of angry rivers, and houses and buildings collapse in hundreds and thousands. Perhaps the mightiest and most turbulent of these rivers is the Brahmaputra that runs through Assam and parts of East Bengal. Indeed, this mighty river has now become a menace to the State of Assam—a state which has been declared to be geologically unstable by eminent scientists. It has become all the more uncontrollable since the great Assam Earthquake of 1950. This terrible earthquake was followed by heavy rock-falls, dangerous landslides, and freakish changes in the courses of rivers. But this is not all. The bed of the Brahmaputra is now far above its normal level, and that is why it overflows its banks and floods the country round, whenever there is heavy rainfall among the hills. Last year it almost swallowed up the old city of Dibrugarh, an important centre of tea-trade in Assam. Fifty years ago, the Brahmaputra was several miles away from Dibrugarh, but today it is about to destroy the entire city from end to end.

Its fifteen hundred feet stone revetment has been washed away, and many of its fine buildings have crumbled into the river. The Circuit House, the old District Club, and the Posts and Telegraphs buildings have gone down under water. A part of the revetment and the Posts and Telegraphs office tumbled into the roaring waters of the Brahmaputra under the very eyes of Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru, who toured the flooded areas with twenty-two members of the Indian Parliament.

As a result of the floods of the Teesta, the Torsa, and the Ganges, the districts of Jalpaiguri, Cooch-Behar, and Maldah in West Bengal suffered irreparable loss, and many thousands of people were rendered homeless and helpless.

The flood havoc in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh was more widespread than that of Assam. In Bihar the Kosi, Gandak, and Bagmati rivers were in spate, and vast stretches of land in Muzaffarpur, Saran, and Champaran were under water. Crops were destroyed and thousands of houses collapsed. The damage

caused by the Bihar floods is very heavy and runs into several crores. In West Bengal, the Damodar overflows its banks from time to time. A few years ago, it washed many miles of the railway lines between Howrah and Burdwan, and landed the people in great trouble. Many fertile lands were spoilt by deposits of thick layers of sand.

We have seen the natural causes of these floods, which are often a menace to the peace, safety, and prosperity of the people of our country. But there are some causes which are man-made. With the advancement of civilization and the progress of trade, commerce, and industries, our government and capitalists have felled down the trees of the great forests at the foot of mountains, cleared the jungles all around, and hindered the easy flow of river waters by raising embankments to protect railway lines and metallized roadways. The result is that there is nothing to check the tide of these mighty rivers when they rush down the hills and mountains during heavy rainfalls. Most of the forests are gone, and they have been replaced by crowded cities, townships, and villages which suffer terribly when the rivers are in spate.

Again, the embankments, erected thoughtlessly, make the waters of a river to swell during the rains, until they burst over their banks, break through all barriers, and sweep over wide areas, destroying everything on their way.

What is worse, these awful floods are followed by famine and outbreak of diseases in the places affected by them. Cholera, typhoid, pneumonia, and malarial fever are some of the diseases that carry away hundreds of men, who manage to escape the ravages of flood, somehow or other. Moreover, the loss of cattle and food-crops compels many people to starve for months on end and die by inches. The doles given by the government are hardly enough to keep body and soul together. Mrs. Sucheta Kripalani, who made a four-day tour of the flooded areas of Saharsa and Monghyr districts, reported that the victims of flood in those places were living on slugs. She also spoke of a woman who died after a six weeks' diet of spinach.

It has been found that heavy floods in one part of the country are accompanied by drought in another. That is why the Punjab, and Western Uttar Pradesh were suffering last year for want of rain. And after months of drought Orissa had to pass through a terrible flood, when the Mahanadi burst its banks during the rains. Even in West Bengal, large areas in the districts of Burdwan and Birbhum are suffering for want of ample rainfall. Possibly Nature keeps up her balance in the distribution of water in this way.

We must not, however, think that flood is an unmixed evil. Floods are needed for irrigating dry lands and renewing the soil. East Bengal has been often called the granary of the East. During the rains, the whole of this part of Bengal is flooded by the waters of the Padma, the Meghna, and other rivers. That is why she is full of smiling cornfields, and abounds in fruits and flowers. Moreover, the floods wash the countryside every year and make it healthy. They clear off all the dirt, filth, and decayed vegetable matter that infest these places during the rains. They also prevent the outbreak of malaria and other diseases.

So, the problem is not to prevent floods altogether but to control them. This can be done in the most natural way by afforestation and raising of embankments in the right places, with a large number of culverts and bridges. These will help the flow of waters across the plains, and restrain the fury of rivers thwarted in their course. The River Valley Projects are a great step forward in this direction. The construction of dams at selected sites will preserve the waters of our great rivers, much of which now flows into the sea. This water will be released for irrigation in the dry months of the year. It will also help the work of mammoth hydro-electric plants that will generate an immense volume of cheap electric power for the development of industries. One of these is the great Bhakra Nangal Project which has harnessed the waters of the Sutlej, so that they may irrigate vast areas of dry and desolate lands in the Punjab. It has completed its first stage, and was opened some time ago by Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru amid the rejoicings of the whole nation. In our part of the country, the construction of the Tilaya Dam and Bokaro Thermal Power Station is a long stride forward in the Damodar Valley Project, which is making excellent progress and nearing completion. These have been followed by Konar Dam in Hazaribagh District, Canada Dam at Massanjore, and the Durgapur Barrage with its canal system which has made much progress. The Kosi Project is well in hand, and so is the Hirakund Dam Project in Orissa.

But the taming of the Brahmaputra is the most difficult problem of the day. The Government of India have appointed a Central Board for Flood Control. This Board will be advised by two other expert bodies—one for the Ganges Valley and another for the Brahmaputra. They will report their suggestions after the fullest investigation of this problem. In the meantime, the Government have decided to construct earthen embankments on both sides of the Brahmaputra, covering four hundred miles. Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru has appealed for the co-operation of the

people. He has held up before them the example of Peoples' China, where twelve hundred thousand people have completed a major project within a record time of eighty days. This should be an inspiring example to the people of India, and our vast man-power must stand behind the government in fighting against the ravages of Nature. There is yet another hurdle to be crossed in solving this problem. The Government of India must contact the rulers of Nepal, Bhutan, Sikkim, and Tibet. These are the places where rain-water gathers and then comes down on the plains below. These rivers must be trained at their sources among the mountains, so that they may not sweep violently downwards across the plains. And the best way of controlling the velocity of the rivers is afforestation of their catchment areas. It is among hills and mountains that little drops of water form into trickles. The presence of vegetation among them and the plains below acts as a damper, cushions the rain, and holds up the water in the soil. Any one, who has seen torrents of water rushing down the naked hillsides, knows how the wanton destruction of forest-covers often leads to damages and destructive floods in the river valleys of India. And we should remember that afforestation is a simple remedy for these floods and much cheaper than the costly and ambitious schemes, of which we hear so much in these days.

This is the way in which we may turn the havoc of floods into a real boon to the people of our country. And in this noble work, every one of us must do his bit. Our men of science should work, hand-in-hand, with our economists, technicians, business men, and political leaders to harness the waters of our mighty rivers for the good of the teeming millions of India. Even our hardy peasants and day-labourers must work under the guidance of these men and contribute to the peace, contentment, and prosperity of our motherland.

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#### COMMERCIAL EDUCATION

India is a vast country. She is really a sub-continent inhabited by about four hundred million of people of many races and many languages. Yet, she is mainly an agricultural country and has made little progress in commerce, industries, and manufactures. That is why we must try to increase our national wealth by trade and commerce. We must not be content with merely exporting cheap raw materials to foreign countries—materials which will return to us as finished goods at a much higher price. We must, therefore, give up the old-world idea

of going back to the villages, and taking to spinning, weaving, and tilling the fields for corn. This is no better than a dream in our days. We must enrich the country by every means, raise the standard of living all round, and find employment for vast millions of men and women who remain idle for the better part of the year, and starve from day to day. That is why commerce is the life-blood of a nation in modern times.

England is a small country but she is one of the foremost nations of the world, as she has made wonderful progress in commerce and industries. And it is due to her vast wealth amassed by trade, commerce, and industries that America has become the banker of all the world. The little islands of Japan have become so prosperous and powerful by trade and commerce. Japan was in ruins when she was defeated in the Second World War. Yet, she has revived wonderfully, and Japanese goods have swept the market once again. Indeed, England, India, and many other countries have imposed heavy tariffs on Japanese goods to protect their own industries. This is the reason for which the sages of India have told us that the Goddess of Fortune favours those who are engaged in trade and commerce. But we have paid little attention to these precepts, and India is now the home of many millions of men and women, who are hewers of wood and drawers of water in the land of their birth. It is, therefore, time for the government and people of India to turn the hands of the clock. They should try to industrialise the country, expand her trade and commerce, and see that exports exceed imports. This aspect of national development is more glaring in our luckless province of West Bengal. Almost all her trade and commerce are in foreign hands, or in the hands of men who migrated from other provinces. Bengal gave much time to liberal education, and this made her sons the leaders of thought in India for long. But the times are changed, and it is high time to see that many of our students may feel interested in commerce, like their brothers in England, America, or Japan.

And for this they require a fairly good education in Economics, Advanced Accountancy, Insurance, Commercial Arithmetic, and allied subjects. They have also to learn English, as they will never be able to carry on a flourishing business without a sound knowledge of this international language. This is all the more necessary in the case of those who are engaged in export and import business. There are men who think that one may prosper in commerce with little or no education. They point to the great Marwari community, the Bhatias, and the Guzratis, who have made vast fortunes by trade in Calcutta. But they should bear in mind that, so far as the Marwaris are concerned, most of them are speculators. They are more active in the

share market than in anything else. Of course, there are honourable exceptions like the Birlas, the Goenkas, the Kanorias, or Messrs. Surajmull Nagarmull. They are all commercial magnates who run jute mills, cotton mills, banking corporations, and carry on a flourishing export and import trade. They have realised that their young men must be educated in commercial institutions and given practical training at the same time. The sons of these families are mostly graduates in commerce. Even those who do not join the university are placed in the hands of excellent tutors at home, and given a decent education in the subjects that are of the highest importance in the commercial world.

For long years in our country, there was hardly any institution for the study of commerce. Bombay, which is the home of commerce in India, realised it, and the Sydenham College of Commerce was opened. It was the first of its kind in India, and many young men from Calcutta used to go there for receiving commercial education. Even before this college was started, the sons of commercial magnates were carefully educated in India and abroad. That is why we find that Bombay has given to India many learned merchant-princes like Sir Jamshedji Tata, Sir Vithaldas Thackersay, Sir Ibrahim Rahimtullah, S. R. Bomanji, and many others. Their views have largely influenced our economic and political ideology. Here in Bengal, all the partners of Martin Burn & Co. are learned men, who have received years of training in England. We must know the theories—the gathered wisdom of ages—before we start on a commercial career in life. They will enable us to tackle all problems with care, precision, and foresight. A young man with a commerce degree, will fare much better in a business career than one who has only a little practical experience of commercial firms. He may be a good worker, but he will never be able to direct a great commercial enterprise. But we should also bear in mind that commercial education must be supplemented by practical training. We must not merely learn and appreciate the theories of commercial science. We must also have practical training as apprentices in great commercial firms. We must know how to keep accounts accurately, handle bills of exchange, bills of lading, and things of the kind. Moreover, our young commerce graduates should see with their own eyes the work of great power-driven engines and dynamos in India and other great industrial centres of the world. It is a good thing that many of the great commercial firms of India are now sending educated young men to England, America, and other countries to take training as engineers, mechanics, and technicians. Those who desire to shine as great engineers or contractors should see how great buildings are made, bridges constructed, and railway lines

laid in other countries. In a word, practical training develops and perfects the knowledge gained at college.

At any rate, if we are to hold our own against the other countries of the world, we must create in the minds of our young men a commercial bias. But there are men and men. There are students who are fit for liberal education in the universities. There are young men who are fit for learned professions like Letters, Law, or Medicine. They should surely qualify for these. But every facility must be given to diligent youths who are interested in commerce. If they have talents and are encouraged by the government and the great commercial magnates of the country, they are sure to prosper in life and do great good to the land of their birth.

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### EVEREST CONQUERED

In every man, there is a desire to see the unseen and know the unknown. It is this love of the unknown which has inspired all the heroic adventures of men who were resolved to conquer Everest. Death had no terror for them, and the comforts of home-life had no charm for them. Like Tennyson's Ulysses, they had vowed to strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield. This was the secret of their great love of the mountains, and their passionate longing to attain what no man has attained ever before.

Everest is the highest peak of the Himalayas, the loftiest mountain ranges in the world. \*It rises to a height of twenty-nine thousand and twenty-eight feet, or about five miles and a half above the sea-level. It is the crest of the Himalayas or the home of snow. It stands on the border between Nepal and Tibet, and it is named after Sir George Everest, a noted geographer and surveyor of England.

Since then many valiant efforts have been made to conquer this mighty, snow-clad peak of the Himalayas. But for thirty long years, it defied all challenges, and many heroic lives were lost in the endeavour. And at last it has been conquered by a unique combination of science, courage, and glorious weather. This was achieved at 11.30 A M on May 29, 1953. After very laborious, risky, and painful efforts, Hillary and Tenzing stood on the roof of the world in a blaze of glorious sunshine. One feels tempted to fancy that the gods were smiling from Heaven, when the labours of Hillary and Tenzing were crowned with victory.

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\* Report of the Ministry of Scientific Research—The Statesman Nov. 7, 1954.

It is interesting to recall how bands of heroic explorers had tried to scale the giddy heights of the Himalayas for a period of more than thirty years. They had to make their way through dense forests at the foot of the Himalayas, creep over vast snowfields, and brave terrible snowfalls on their way to the crest of this grand mountain, extending from the borders of Afghanistan to the northern boundary of Burma in the east.

The first expedition to Everest was undertaken nearly seventy years after its discovery. It was led by Col. C. K. Howard Bury in 1921, but it was saddened by the death of one of the climbers, the famous Scottish mountaineer, Dr. Kellas, who died of heart failure. However, the members of the expedition explored the approaches to Everest from the north and the east, and found a practical route along the north-east shoulder of the mountain. The next year General Bruce, working on these findings, climbed to about 27, 300 feet, but this expedition too was marred by the death of seven porters who were killed by an avalanche. Then came another campaign led by Col. Norton in 1924. The expedition began badly in foul weather and two of the party died in cold and frost. But in May Norton himself reached a height of 28, 126 feet, climbing alone, during the last part of the ascent. And early in June, Mallory and Irvine set out for a more daring assault in high hopes and good weather conditions. They were last seen at 28,000 feet, and then disappeared among the snows. After this there were four successful flights over the summit by British pilots. In 1933, Hugh Ruttledge led an expedition in the course of which three of its members—Smythe, Harris, and Wager—all climbed to about 28,100 feet. In 1936, a second expedition led by Ruttledge was abandoned in bad weather conditions, the monsoon coming much earlier than expected. And two years later, an attempt by Tilman from the north was again defeated by foul weather. In that year, the lull before the monsoon did not occur at all. But there was one strange and sad episode during these memorable years.

In 1953, a reconnaissance party led by Shipton found, at the bottom of a mountain in the North Col, the body of a solitary climber with the gagged remains of a tent and a diary. He was an Englishman named Maurice Wilson, who made a solo attempt on Mount Everest under the spell of inspiration. He travelled in disguise through Tibet and died of exposure. His diary tells the story of his romantic adventure among the eternal snows. After the war, the nature of these campaigns has been changed. Experience has shown that entry into Tibet is simply out of the question for western climbers. And in Nepal, due to changes in regime, many of the restrictions imposed on foreigners were removed. So, the British, French, Swiss, American, German, and

Japanese expeditions have all been permitted to enter Nepal in recent years.

The first successful expedition was greatly benefited by the experience of the earlier assaults on Everest. Most of its members had little knowledge of high altitudes. Yet, the weather was fine almost all through the excursion, and Nature had forgotten her crueler moods for a fairly long spell. The oxygen apparatus, used in this famous adventure, proved more satisfactory than ever before, and the Sherpa porters had vastly improved in mountaineering skill and worked with resolute confidence. At the same time, the European members of the expedition enjoyed remarkably good health and fortune in the early weeks of the attempt. But above all, the expedition was crowned with success as it was able to build on the experience of the ten previous attempts in the past, during which at least sixteen lives were lost. Even today Everest is as harsh, threatening, and formidable as before, but thirty years of patient toil, suffering, and self-sacrifice enabled a band of heroic explorers to reach its summit, and plant on it the proud banners of India, England, Nepal, New Zealand, and the United Nations. All honour to Hillary and Tenzing for this great and gallant victory !

History repeats itself, and only a few days ago, a Swiss expedition twice reached the summit of Mount Everest by another route. So, Everest has been conquered and reconquered.

But we must remember that the first conquest of Everest was due to the combined efforts of the whole party, led by Col. Hunt. There were daring spirits who were resolved to climb the forbidding heights. But they were helped by a band of devoted and selfless workers who were waiting anxiously below. There were also the medical and technical experts, the porters, and the gallant sherpas, whose courage, confidence, and cheerfulness enlivened all the members of the party and filled them with hope. Indeed, the British leader of the expedition, Col. Hunt, expressed the feeling of all the world when he said, 'Let it be clearly understood that he who first attains the summit of Everest, will also stand, as it were, on the apex of a pyramid of hard-won experience.' It has been rightly observed that the names of the men who have succeeded in this great endeavour will live for ever in the Temple of Fame. And, in this hour of triumph, we must remember with gratitude the names of Howard Bury, Bruce, Norton, Ruttledge, Shipton, Tilman, and their heroic companions. It was they who paved the way for this great and glorious conquest.

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## DEMOCRACY AND DICTATORSHIP

We are living in an age of democracy. Almost every nation of the world has now realized that, with all its failings, democracy is the most desirable form of government. Let us see what it really means. Democracy has been defined by Abraham Lincoln as the government of the people, by the people, and for the people. We feel that the ideal of this popular and beneficent form of government cannot be defined more beautifully, vividly, and truthfully. The same ideal was preached by President Woodrow Wilson of America during the First World War in his address to the Congress in April, 1917. With a heart full of noble idealism, he declared that the world must be made safe for democracy.

These memorable words were spoken by President Wilson at a time when Germany was fighting relentlessly, not only to crush the freedom of smaller states like Holland and Belgium, but also to bring all Europe under the heels of the German Emperor. The result was that all Europe was in the throes of a great war that cost not only tons of money, but also millions of precious human lives. There were no atom bombs in those days. Yet, the combined strength of some of the greatest free nations of the world—England, France, America, and their allies—was able to bring Germany down on her knees, and the Kaiser lost his throne. He lived several years in exile before his death. In the First and Second World Wars, the power of democracy triumphed over the forces of despotism.

The question is why we should prefer democracy to any other form of government. The first and foremost reason for our choice is that it is founded on the noble principles of liberty and equality. In a true democracy there is not a single class of men who enjoy special privileges. It is opposed to the theory that some people are born to rule, and the vast majority of men in the world are born to obey. In a democracy, all the people in the state have the same facilities and opportunities for education, culture, and the right to work and earn a living. In a word, not a single man in the state should remain unemployed if he is willing to work. It is the duty of a truly popular government to see that all the people in its care are peaceful, contented, and happy. It is not given to everyone to prosper or shine in life. But it is surely the right of every citizen of the state to live, work, and enjoy the blessings of freedom. It is a government based on the will of the people; that can safeguard the rights and interests of all classes of men and women. This can never be done, if only a handful of noble men or commercial magnates hold the reins of government in their own hands, or a dictator rules all the land by his iron will and strength of arms.

John Stuart Mill was quite right when he pointed out, long ago, that the rights of individuals can be safeguarded only when they are able to stand and fight for them. It is often said that men belonging to the higher classes of society will be able to look after the interests of the people much better than the masses of men, who have neither the education nor the intelligence to understand what is good for them. But long experience has proved that the greatest good of the greatest number depends on the co-operation and goodwill of the people themselves. And this can be achieved, if only they are made to feel that they are not mere dumb, driven cattle, but partners and fellow-workers of the men who have been elected to run the government. Sir Henry Campbell Bannerman, once the Prime Minister of England, told the House of Commons that good government is no substitute for self-government. These noble words were spoken by him when, at the termination of the Boer War, England made South Africa one of the self-governing dominions of the British Empire.

The greatest merit of democracy is its educative influence. It is good for the citizen to feel that he can influence the policy of the government by his vote at the time of election, and voice his feelings through radio-broadcasts, public meetings, and campaigns in the press—the press which is now looked upon as the fourth estate of the realm. He knows that he is a citizen living under a democratic government and he enjoys three great freedoms—freedom of speech, freedom of movement, and freedom to stand for his rights and liberties. It thrills the heart of every man with the love of country, and makes him feel that the government is an organization, set up by the people themselves, to safeguard their rights and liberties and work for their well-being. It also develops many personal qualities in the citizen, such as the desire to learn, to respect the views and feelings of his fellow-men, and to fight for the honour, freedom, and glory of his motherland. It gives him joy in the midst of work, and sweetens the days of his life with the deepest feelings of love, charity, and tolerance. But the success of a democracy depends on the honesty, diligence, and talents of the men who are at the helm of the government. It depends also on the moral and intellectual qualities of the men who vote at the time of elections. That is why when the Reform Bill of 1832 came up before the Parliament, one of its members, Mr. Lowe, observed, in the course of an excellent speech, "We must educate our masters." He was right as, in the last analysis, it is the people who rule in a democracy. This is all the more true in our age.

There are two kinds of democracies, direct and indirect. There was direct democracy in the small city-states of Greece,

where all the citizens used to assemble and vote on every question affecting the interests of the people. Such a thing is not possible today, when there are large and densely crowded countries in the East and the West. Its only relic is to be found in small countries like Switzerland. But we should remember that the democracy of the states of ancient Greece was the democracy of the ruling classes. The slaves had no rights and liberties, and they were beyond the pale of democracy. They were hewers of wood and drawers of water, all life long. The same thing may be said about the ancient republic of Rome, which began to crumble after the fall of Julius Caesar. The democracy that is working today may be described as indirect democracy or representative government. After a number of years, the people elect their representatives to the parliament and assemblies. And the party which is in a majority in the House of the People is asked to elect a leader who forms the government. This leader becomes the Prime Minister and appoints ministers of his choice. And the Prime Minister and the ministers selected by him form the cabinet, which must be approved by the Head of the State. That is all the reason why every citizen of the State should be educated, so that he may understand what his rights and duties are. No democracy can ever succeed, if the vast millions of men and women under its care are steeped in darkness and ignorance.

There is another form of government which prevails in some of the countries of the world. This is dictatorship which means one-man rule over the State. General Franco of Spain is a dictator. So are Chiang Kai Sheik of Nationalist China and President Syngman Rhee of Korea. And such were also Hitler in Germany, and Signeur Mussolini in Italy. The dictatorship of Hitler and Mussolini stifled the voice of the people in their countries for long years, and crushed the rights and liberties of the people at the point of the bayonet, the sword, and the gun. They followed in the wake of great dictators of the past like Napoleon Bonaparte or the Kaiser of Germany. All Germany and Italy were behind an iron curtain during the Second World War. And there was violent propaganda carried on in each of these countries by the agents of the ruling clique. The vast majority of the people were groaning under oppression and tyranny, and millions of young men were marched to the battlefields to fight and die at the altar of the towering ambition of Hitler and Mussolini. Theirs was not to reason why, but to do and die. The dictatorship of Hitler enabled Germany to set up a most powerful war machine. Her powerful and efficient army, formidable airforce, and fleets of torpedoes and submarines struck terror into the hearts of men all over Europe. And what was the end of it all? A machine cannot last for ever, however efficient, perfect, or powerful it may be. So, after years of

straining, the German War Machine broke down like a house of cards, and both Hitler and Mussolini died in disgrace, leaving a trail of horror and bloodshed behind them. Today their names are under a ban, and their very memory is cursed all over the civilized world. The fall of dictatorships in Italy, Germany, and China proves to all the world that a purely despotic and soulless government cannot live for ever. A government which is not founded on the will of the people is doomed to die sooner or later. Even the Great Roman Empire crumbled away, inch by inch, after the fall of the Republic. We must remember that the voice of the people is the voice of God.

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### THE PROBLEM OF UNEMPLOYMENT

We are living in very hard days. There was a time, long, long ago, when the population of the world was much smaller than it is today. That was the golden age when every piece of land maintained its own man. But the times are now changed, and the population of the world is growing so rapidly that most of the countries are densely crowded. It has now become a very serious and difficult problem to give bread to these people and find employment for them. So, unemployment has now become a chronic malady in every land. And to the vast majority of the people of India, life means nothing more than sweat, toil, and tears. There is hardly a man in India, who is not willing to work for a living. Yet, however much he may try, he cannot find any work to do.

This is all the more true of the educated young man of the middle class. His condition is much worse than that of the tillers of the soil in the villages. These men work in the fields and raise crops, which give them at least two square meals a day. They are, of course, in trouble when the harvesting season is over. Yet, they may take to cottage industries, or they may also be employed in the public works started by the government. But even these men die of hunger and poverty, in hundreds and thousands, when a natural calamity, like flood, famine, or earthquake comes upon the land. We may recall the horrors of the great Bengal Famine of 1943, when about five million people died of starvation. We are reminded of the Bihar Earthquake of 1935, when great cities like Monghyr and Muzaffarpur were all but ruined, and many people died amid the falling debris of buildings, or during the famine that followed the havoc of earthquake. Last year Upper Assam, Bihar, and Eastern

Uttar Pradesh suffered terribly from the ravages of flood. Here in India we have to depend on the mercy of Nature for a fairly good and prosperous year and, in a vast country like ours, flood in one part is followed by drought and famine in another. These natural calamities have very much worsened the problem of unemployment.

If we think over it deeply, we shall find that some of the causes of unemployment in India are man-made. The first and foremost of them is the tremendous refugee problem created by the partition of India. The population of India has been swelled by the influx of refugees from Western and Eastern Pakistan. These helpless men deserve our deepest sympathy. They have lost their all and find life intolerable in Pakistan. They have lost not only their rights, liberties, and freedom of worship in a theocratic state, but also property worth billions. Some of the richest men of Western Punjab and East Bengal are now paupers. The Government of India are trying their best to help these men. But it is a problem which is too big and too serious even for a great government. It has become all the more difficult, as it is a one-way traffic from Pakistan to India. What is worse, many Muslims who had migrated to Pakistan, are now returning to India. Moreover, there are few avenues of employment for our young men, as much of the trade and commerce of India is in the hands of foreigners even now—foreigners who are backed by the profiteers, black-marketers, and gamblers in our own country.

Moreover, the middle classes of India have a burning passion for knowledge. It is well known that there are many parents in India, who send their boys and girls to schools and colleges at a great sacrifice. We feel that no civilized country should discourage men who love knowledge. The question is how to find employment for all of them. Many ways and means have been suggested by our leaders. The greatest among them was Mahatma Gandhi. He called upon our men and women to go back to the villages and earn their bread in the sweat of their brow. He was against the spread of machinery. He thought that mills and factories breed many evils, and make the people cold, callous, and immoral. In his view the masses of men and women, working in mills and factories, are given to hard drinking, quarrelling, and fighting among themselves. So, he advised the closing down of all these things. He gave unto the people of our country the message of *charka* or the spinning wheel, and told them to work for the good of the villages. There, he thought, most of our people can make the best use of their time in spinning, ploughing, watering the fields, digging wells, making roads, nursing the sick, and indeed helping those

## **ABOLITION OF ZAMINDARY IN WEST BENGAL**

The abolition of Zamindaries is the first fruit of the reforming zeal of free India. It is a long-delayed reform which is desired by almost all the people and parties of India—Congressmen, Communists, and Independents alike. The only people who have objected to it are the Zamindars themselves. The National Government of India have adopted the policy of abolition with compensation. But our communist friends and many amiable gentlemen in the ranks of the Congress are in favour of a total war against the Zamindars, and the confiscation of their properties, without paying a single pie as compensation'.

In order to understand the significance of this great event in the history of New India, it will be useful to glance at the circumstances in which the Zamindaries were created under British Rule. It was Lord Cornwallis, one of the ablest Governors-General of India, who introduced the Permanent Settlement of land revenue in Bengal. He came after Warren Hastings, the first Governor-General of India, who used to farm out Zamindaries to the highest bidder on lease for a number of years. This system ruined many Zamindars, who often oppressed their ryots to meet the heavy demands of the government. And at times they failed to pay the revenue which had been agreed upon. So, the revenue realised from the Zamindars varied from year to year. To avoid all this trouble and uncertainty of income, the Directors of the East India Company revised the policy followed by Hastings. In 1786, they sent instructions to Lord Cornwallis to make a settlement with the Zamindars for a period of ten years. They declared that this arrangement would be made permanent, if it worked well.

Lord Cornwallis watched this system for seven years, and was well pleased with its working. So, he made it permanent in 1793. By it the Zamindars were made the proprietors of the land allotted to them, and they were no longer mere farmers of revenue. In this way the land revenue of Bengal was fixed in perpetuity. It must be conceded that, in those times, Permanent Settlement was a great boon to the people of Bengal. It created a landed aristocracy that was rich, loyal, and powerful. They improved cultivation in the hope of making higher profits, and raised the value of land. Unlike the Zamindars of old, they were kind, considerate, and even generous to their tenants. Time was when these noble houses did great good to the people who lived on their lands. But, with the years, many of them became selfish, cruel, and oppressive. Moreover, the Permanent Settlement did not recognize the right of the ryot to the land, and made no provision for the protection of his liberties. These defects were found out later on, and laws were

made, from time to time, to remedy them. In our province, the Bengal Tenancy Act was passed and amended, many a time, to meet the changing conditions of rural Bengal. But the ryot was too poor to compel the Zamindar to follow the law or respect his rights. The rapidly increasing wealth of the Zamindar made him indolent, luxurious, and callous to the needs of his tenants. And not content with his princely income, he began to raise *abwabs* from his tenants. These were illegal exactions over and above the rents paid by the ryot. The history of old Bengal tells us how money was forcibly realized from the poor peasants on the occasion of marriages or festivals in the Zamindar's family. The poor tiller of the soil had to pay for the pleasure-trips of his landlord to hill stations or the seaside. Moreover, the Zamindar exacted forced labour and free service from his tenants every now and then.

But this was not all. He had his staff of managers, rent-collectors, sepoys, clerks, and accountants. These men used to work on disgracefully low salaries, and had to make a living by demanding bribes from tenants for every little work done for them, including the giving of rent receipts. Many an assistant in the Zamindar's establishment used to make a fortune by taking bribes from the ryots in distress. Indeed, the Zamindars became uncrowned kings of their estates, and looked upon these as little kingdoms of their own. There were, of course, honourable exceptions here and there. But the vast majority of them were miniature tyrants under the patronage of the British Raj. There were great Englishmen among the rulers of India, but they came after long intervals and were bitterly disliked by the Europeans domiciled in India. Such were Lord Ripon and Lord Hardinge among Viceroys, and men like Sir Henry Cotton, Sir William Wedduburn, and Allan Hume, the founder and first President of the Indian National Congress. They were real friends of India, and their names are still cherished in the loving memory of our countrymen. The vast majority of Viceroys and Governors followed the policy of 'divide and rule' in order to perpetuate British rule in India. They created ill-will between the Hindus and the Mahomedans by favouring one community against the other. They also invented what are known as the Scheduled Castes, in order to split the Hindu community into rival factions contending for power. And they allowed the native princes and Zamindars to rule like despots over their people on the one single condition of being loyal subjects of Britain. These men fleeced the toiling millions of India, in order to make costly presents to the Governors and Governors-General, and to entertain them in a right royal style. They also made princely donations on ceremonial occasions like darbars coronations, visits

of royal princes, and the like. Moreover, they had to contribute huge sums of money in times of war in the hope of gaining titles and lengthening the size of their names. And as a reward of their devotion and loyalty to the British Raj, the Zamindars, all over India, were given special electorates through which they might be returned to the Provincial and Imperial Legislative Councils. These constituencies were, more or less, like pocket boroughs through which the Zamindars made their way to the legislatures. What was worse, they were given a weightage beyond all proportions.

That was why the princes and the Zamindars were, as a rule, hated by the vast masses of India. There were bitter complaints and agitations against their misrule and oppression, from time to time. But the British rulers of India took no heed of them, and allowed the Zamindars to have their own way. So, these powerful and influential men became the staunchest supporters of British Government. And, shame of shame, the majority of Zamindars in Bengal issued a manifesto in support of the Rowlatt Act, which was passed in the teeth of violent opposition from the non-official members of the Imperial Legislative Council. And it was this lawless law that led to the Martial Law regime in the Punjab. The late Mr. Jitendralal Banerjee was quite right when, in the warmth of his eloquence, he described the Zamindars as the 'pampered vampires of the empire.'

Let us, however, remember, once again, that there were honourable exceptions. Rabindranath Tagore was a Zamindar, and so were Maharaja Manindra Chandra Nandy of Cossimbazar, Maharaja Sashi Kanta Acharya and Sri Brojendra Kishore Roychowdhury of Mymensingh, and some other leaders of the landed aristocracy. They were enlightened landlords, and warm champions of India's valiant struggle for freedom. It is really the misrule and oppression of the vast majority of Zamindars that stirred public opinion, and there was a cry for the abolition of Zamindaries and the redistribution of land among the landless. On the coming of freedom, the other provinces of India, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh in particular, passed laws for the abolition of Zamindary—laws which are still in a fluid state as they have been challenged many times in courts of law and amended in the light of public opinion. The Government of West Bengal have been the last to move. And at last they have passed an Act for the abolition of Zamindaries in West Bengal. This is known as 'The West Bengal State Acquisition Act of 1953.'

The provisions of this Act are based on figures which are fairly accurate and reliable. It has been found that, in West Bengal, about thirty-two lacs of people depend on agriculture,

of whom fourteen lacs are agricultural tenants. And it has been found also that one hundred and seventeen lac acres of land are under cultivation, of which four lac acres belong to middlemen or intermediaries. Again, one hundred and thirteen lac acres of land belong to the groups, who are known as ryots and under-ryots.

According to the provisions of this law, the ceiling of *khas* land that may be retained by the present owner is twenty-five acres, or seventy-five bighas. This will leave four lac acres of land for redistribution. Secondly, a mine-owner cannot keep more than ten square miles of land. Thirdly, compensation will be paid to the owners of lands according to the following table :—

It should be noted also that this compensation is refundable within forty years, bearing interest at  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent to 3 per cent per annum.

NET INCOME	COMPENSATION PAYABLE
1. For the first Rs. 500 or less.	Twenty times.
2. For the next Rs. 500 or less.	Eighteen times.
3. For the next Rs. 1000 or less.	Seventeen times.
4. For the next Rs. 2000 or less.	Twelve times.
5. For the next Rs. 1000 or less.	Ten times.
6. For the next Rs. 15000 or less.	Six times.
7. For the next Rs. 80000 or less.	Three times.
8. For the balance of net income.	Two times.

In dwelling on this Act, we shall do well to bear in mind that about ninety-five per cent of the Zamindaries in West Bengal are not states inherited from ancestors. With the exception of a few, most of them were purchased by men who preferred to invest the money, earned by them in business or professions, in land. It was supposed to be a very stable form of security in those days. And, for the last quarter of a century, it has not been possible for any Zamindar to oppress his tenants and make illegal exactions. During these years, most of them have been hard put to it to pay government revenue, road-cess, and education-cess, not to speak of Agricultural

Income Tax. The Zamindar was liable to the Government for road-cess, and had to pay it at any cost, even though his tenants might refuse to pay it. If he tried to exact it from his tenants, he would be mobbed. And if he failed to pay his dues to the government before the sunset of the appointed day, his estate would be sold by auction. So, he was fairly between the devil and the deep sea. Indeed, most of them are the victims of the sins of their ancestors. Their condition is like that of Louis XVI of France, who died for the sins of his forbears. It has, in a sense, been a blessing to most of them to be relieved of this wearisome burden.

However, it is not clear to us how the abolition of Zamindaries can be justified, when the Government of India have been very liberal to the Native Princes. And we should also remember that it is only the estates of the Zamindars that are going to be nationalised, when all the other favourities of fortune have been left untouched. We are very severe with landlords, but there are many other lords who are still basking in the sunshine of official favour. We have, among us, coal-lords, iron-lords, cotton-lords, press-lords, medical-lords, rice-lords, wheat-lords, race-lords, fish-lords, and lords of lofty mansions in the city of Calcutta. Let us abolish the Zamindaries by all means. But let us give and take, live and let live.

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### PORtUGUESE POSSESSIONS IN INDIA

Portugal's colonies in India are a relic of dreams of quest and conquest. In the fifth century, the Arabs conquered Egypt and enjoyed a monopoly of trade with India. From that time onward, Indian wares passed through Muslim hands to Venice, which gained vast wealth and power by her trade with the East. The Portuguese kings of the fifteenth century looked with envy on the riches of Cairo and Venice, and longed to have a share in their trade with the East. With this object in view, Prince Henry the navigator, set sail to discover a sea-route from Portugal to India, but he died before he could fulfil his desire. He was followed by Bartholomeu Diaz, who was driven by storms to land between the Cape of Good Hope and Port Elizabeth. He rounded the Cape of Good Hope in 1487 and returned to Lisbon in December 1488. Ten years later, this quest for a new world in the East was taken up by Vasco Da Gama who landed at Calicut, which was ruled by a prosperous Hindu prince, known as the Zamorin. This prince was kind to the strangers but could not help them. The Arab traders stood in

the way of Vasco Da Gama, who could not do much business. So, after visiting Cannanore, he returned to Lisbon in August, 1499.

But the King of Portugal was bent on founding an empire in the East. So, a year after, he sent a larger fleet under Pedro Alvares Cabral, who established a factory at Calicut, and took with him good cargoes from Cannanore and Cochin, which were ruled by Hindu Princes. The Portuguese hated all Muslims and killed them without mercy. The King of Portugal was proud of this great adventure and obtained from the Pope of Rome the grand style of 'Lord of the Conquest, Navigation, and Commerce of Ethiopia, Arabia, Persia, and India.' Lured by this vision of glory, he sent Francisco De Almeida as his first Viceroy in the East. This nobleman was the leader of what is known as 'the blue water' school. He tried his best to expand trade and commerce, and thought that the Portuguese factories on the coast of India should be protected by his fleets in command of the sea. He looked upon the idea of establishing a Portuguese Empire in the East as an empty dream. He was succeeded by a very able, strong, and intelligent man. This was Affonso D' Albuquerque, who shared the passionate longing of the King of Portugal to found an empire in the East. He desired to occupy some important points on the coastline for the purpose of trading, and to rule them directly. He decided also to colonise selected districts by encouraging mixed marriages with the native races, and to build fortresses in places that he could not conquer or colonise. Failing all this, he would induce the native kings to bow to the power of the King of Portugal and pay him tribute.

His policy was approved by the Home Government and worked fairly well, so long as he lived. And in pursuit of this object, he occupied the island of Goa in 1510 and worked out a system of administration for this district. This was the first strip of Indian territory directly governed by Europeans, since the time of Alexander the Great. He hated the Muslims like poison and excluded them from offices of the state. He appointed Portuguese officers to collect revenue and try criminal cases, with the assistance of Hindu clerks, for whose education he set up a number of schools. He also enrolled native soldiers, commanded by Hindu officers, the first 'sepoy's'. And he abolished the *Suttee* long before it was prohibited in India in 1829. His policy failed not only for its inherent defects, but also for his cruel persecution of the Muslims, which was simply horrible. It is in evidence that he poisoned not only the Zamorin of Calicut but also a Persian official at Ormuz. Yet, the Portuguese had their ships fuelled at Karachi, on their way to Goa, to carry on a holy war against a people who were fighting peacefully and valiantly for their

freedom. And recently they have been permitted to set up a direct telephone line to Lisbon through Karachi. Public memory is proverbially short, and it seems to be still shorter in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

But let us return to our story. After Albuquerque's death, King John the Third of Portugal, a bigoted Catholic, desired to convert all his Indian subjects into Christianity by fair means or foul. In 1590 the Inquisition was set up in Goa which indulged, from the beginning of the seventeenth century, in relentless persecution, and torturing and burning not only of all heretics and infidels, but also of the unlucky old hags who were suspected to be witches. But those dark deeds were not the only causes for the decay of the Portuguese empire in the East. The local governments founded by the Portuguese were corrupt to the core and the men, who had married native women and settled in the country, were most wretched and immoral. Moreover, the temporary union of Spain and Portugal in 1590 landed the smaller country in great trouble. She was involved in the wars of Philip the Second with the English and the Dutch. So, she was no longer able to control and supply a distant empire in the East.

In 1640, Portugal again became a separate kingdom. But in the meantime, two hardier rivals appeared in the Eastern seas. These were the Dutch and the English, who wrested from Portugal almost all her settlements on the coast of the Eastern seas. And their only possessions in India now are Goa, Daman, and Diu, all on the west coast, with an area of eleven hundred square miles and a population of about fifty thousand people of mingled blood, who still retain their Roman Catholic faith and bear European surnames. But by colour, language, and habits of life, they are like the people of India among whom they live.

This is the history of the Portuguese empire-builders in the East. They have lost their all, except small strips of territory in India and East Africa. But they are still as bigoted as in the past, and the liberalising influence of Christian religion has left them cold. They seem to have clean forgotten the lessons of love, repentance, forgiveness, and charity preached by Christ to all the world. They are still dreaming dreams of an Eastern Empire, even at a time when England has given freedom to India and France has willingly given up her colonial possessions, one after another. On the first day of November, 1954, the French possessions in our country were transferred to the Government of India. This great event will be written in letters of gold in the history of the world, and link two great nations in bonds of love and brotherliness for ever. And, in one voice, the sons and daughters of India will exclaim, 'Vivet la France'.

But Portugal is still sailing in troubled waters. Some years ago, the cry for freedom in our country was echoed by our brothers in the Portuguese colonies of India. This was too much for the rulers of Portugal, and they have been trying, with all the weapons in their armoury, to stifle this longing for liberty among the people who are still under their rule. They forget that they governed these territories for the last three hundred years under the protection and patronage of the British rulers of India. Many of our ex-governors were diehards of the worst type, and tried to maintain their stranglehold on India, by suppression, oppression, and repression in devious ways of their own. They tried to rule over India by following the policy of 'divide and rule' and patronising despotic rulers not only in the heart of India, but also in the colonies held by foreigners. It is in the light of this policy that our British rulers encouraged the native princes of India and the Portuguese government at Goa. But no power on earth can chain the forces of the times. Acting under wiser counsels, England quitted India in 1947 and granted freedom to her people. But the government of Portugal is still thundering and threatening vengeance. They have sent troop-ships fuelled at Karachi. And they are carrying on a policy of relentless repression in defence of their colonies. A Committee of Liberation has freed some of the Portuguese enclaves in India like Nagar Haveli and a few other villages. That is why the Portuguese are making war preparations, and hurling false and malicious charges against the Government of India in a language, which is notorious for its violence and vulgarity. Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru has treated this blustering and bullying with the contempt they deserve. He has maintained an attitude of strict neutrality in the internal affairs of the Portuguese colonies. But he has declined, like a true patriot, to help in crushing the resurgent nationalism of the people of Goa, and their valiant struggle for light and liberty. The government of Portugal have declared, time and again, that the people of their colonies are citizens of Portugal and desire to be so till eternity. And they have smothered every voice of protest and every cry of anguish with unrelenting severity.

She is playing this game since 1946, when Dr. Ram Monohar Lohia went to Goa to help its people in their struggle for liberty. These were days when the government of Portugal suppressed the rights and liberties of the people, and established a Court Martial for the trial of political offenders. This court sentenced a highly talented and patriotic citizen like Dr. Braganza, to eight years' rigorous imprisonment. And the Portuguese rulers of Goa were also thinking of exiling this noble patriot to a far-off Portuguese settlement. Indeed, it stirred the kind heart of Mahatma Gandhi, who wrote to the Governor-

General of Portuguese India that 'civil liberty is a rare article in Goa'. And, in a letter nicely written, he told this muddle-headed man to revise his views on civil liberty, withdraw the African police, and allow the people of Goa to frame their own government, with the help of experienced statesmen from Greater India. But his wise words were spoken in vain. The Portuguese have neither brawns nor brains. Even after the departure of the British and the French, they are still clinging to the fond hope of retaining their colonies in India by force, fraud, and devilry. They are appealing to all the world with an air of injured innocence, and they have been supported by two Muslim journals of Karachi, who have even advised them to carry on a *Jehad* against India. But two of the leading journals of Iraq, another Muslim country, have protested against the doings of the Portuguese in India, and fully justified the policy of Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru. And the latest tribute to the heroism of Portugal has come from two Australian journals. One of them writes, "Goa represents the final twilight of European control in India, and Lisbon should realize that the twilight is fading fast". The folly, fury, froth, and foam of the communiques issued by Dr. Salazar Prime Minister of Portugal, prove that he is the leader of a discredited, decadent, and dying nation. His stage-thunders remind us of Satan's address to the fallen angels in Hell, without its fire, force, and eloquence. Yet, the United States of America is indirectly favouring Portuguese colonialism in Asia and Africa. This is revealed in the Dulles-Cunha statement of December 3, 1955. This communiqué declares that Goa is a province of Portugal.

In their desperate rage, the rulers of Portuguese territories have now resorted to brutal oppression to crush the movement for freedom. Among the many instances of their barbarism, one will suffice to enlighten the civilised world in the East and the West. Mr. Anthony De Souza, who offered civil resistance to the powers that be in August and September, 1954, has been sentenced to 28 years' deportation or twenty years' rigorous imprisonment. Many other persons have been sentenced to various terms of imprisonment, and it is feared that some of them have been deported to Portuguese East Africa. The latest act of Portuguese brutality is the Massacre of Innocents on the 15th August, 1955. On that day the Portuguese fired on unarmed Indian volunteers and killed twenty of them. A large number of men were injured by Portuguese firing, and later sentenced to long terms of imprisonment. We feel that the time has now come when these savages should be turned out of India.

We are sure that the brave men and women of Portuguese India will not have to suffer in defence of their rights, liberties, and freedom for long. The time is not far off when the Portuguese

will have to leave the shores of India, not as brothers and friends, but as enemies of Light and Liberty.

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### NATIONALISATION AND PRIVATE ENTERPRISE

The dawn of Independence has deeply influenced the social and political ideals of the people of India. They are now longing to build up a society in which all men will have equal opportunities in every sphere of life. That is why, all over the country, there is a demand for the nationalisation of industries.

The British ruled over India for about two hundred years. During this long period, they did little or nothing for the development of industries in this country. They exported raw materials from India at cheap prices, and sent them back as finished goods to our markets from end to end of the country. But, during the Second World War, exports and imports were virtually stopped, and the government were compelled to build up some industries in India in their own interests.

Moreover, the very few industries that grew up in India were in the hands of foreigners, who enjoyed many special privileges at the hands of the government of the day. The people of our country served those concerns as petty clerks or labourers in mills and factories. India is the largest exporter of jute goods, but almost all the jute mills on the banks of the Ganges are controlled by foreigners. The woollen mills of Cawnpore are in foreign hands and under foreign control. The Calcutta Electric Supply Corporation and Tramways Company are also run by British capitalists. The people of India have now realised that it is high time to bring about a drastic change in this state of things, at a time when vast masses of men and women are unemployed and cannot enjoy even one full meal a day. This is the reason why it is felt that all the industries of India should be run by the State in the interests of the people of India.

'Nationalisation' means the ownership and management of industries by the State. In nationalised industries, the government supply the capital, machinery, tools, technicians, and labourers. The officers appointed by the government supervise all the departments of the industry in the interests of the public. In such a concern, all the profit will come to the government, which will spend it for the development of new industries or public utility services. For the working of these industries, they will be responsible to the legislature elected by the people. So, in a way, the people of India will have a voice in the control and management of these industries.

Nationalisation has other advantages too. In nationalised industries, the labourers will enjoy fair wages and be assured of stability of service and other amenities of life. And for this reason there will be no fear of strikes or dislocation of services. Moreover, it will not have to waste money for advertisement and things of that kind. Such industry will also have modern and up-to-date machinery, and trained personnel. And with all these advantages, a nationalised industry will be able to produce goods on a large scale at cheaper prices that will go to the benefit of the vast millions of poor men in our country.

The government of our country have nationalised all industries which are essential to the safety and welfare of the State, such as Ordnance Factories, Railways, Airways, Atomic energy, and the like. They have also nationalised Life Insurance and the Imperial Bank of India. In West Bengal, the transport services have been largely nationalised.

But nationalisation has many disadvantages, which should be remedied as early as possible. In a nationalised industry, the labourers are assured of their pay and prospects, and do not care to work hard. It suffers for the want of business ability and enthusiasm of those who manage private enterprises. Moreover, the responsibilities of management and supervision are split up among a number of men, and so progress is often hindered by red-tapism. For each and everything, the management will have to obtain the sanction of the government. It is now public knowledge how this rigid red-tapism has resulted in huge wastage of public money and materials in some of the river-valley projects launched by the Government of India. The Fertiliser Scandal is still in public memory. Moreover, it lacks the economy of the master's eye. The private enterpriser closely and carefully supervises the work of the labourers, and tries to minimise expenditure to the best of his power. But in a state-managed industry, no such interest is taken by any one. There everyman's business is no man's business.

Let us now turn to private enterprise. In private enterprise, the owners try to earn as much profit as possible by keeping down the wages of labourers, and denying them the barest amenities of life. In such industries there is no stability of service, and there are frequent conflicts between labour and capital, resulting in strikes.

Again, all the profit earned by any of these concerns goes into the pockets of the capitalists. In such industries old and worn-out machinery is seldom replaced, and there are accidents now and then. Again, the industries which are under foreign control, rarely employ Indian officers, and run them at their own sweet will and in the interests of the directors at home. There

is, moreover, no scope for research or engineering in those works, and they cannot finance key and heavy industries for want of adequate capital. These industries can be properly financed only by the State, with the aid of their highly trained engineers and technicians. But in privately managed industries, a good deal of leakage and wastage is prevented, though the capital thus saved is never spent for the good of the workers.

The question is which of these two ways is to be chosen for the good of the country. The Government of India have declared their industrial policy many a time—a policy which has been approved by the Indian National Congress. It has declared that its ideal is to nationalise the industries of India by stages. With this end in view, they exercise some control over a number of key industries, such as iron, steel, coal, jute, mica, sugar, minerals, shipbuilding, and so on. They are watching these industries and will nationalise them if they are run inefficiently and against the interests of the country. At present they have given priority to agricultural and river-valley projects which will benefit agriculture and industries as well. In a word, they will reconsider the whole question after ten years and do what is good for the country. They realise that it is simply impossible for them to nationalise all the industries at a time. They feel also that the industries, which are now managed by private sectors, should be allowed to carry on if they are run efficiently and in the interests of the public. Moreover, India is not a totalitarian state, and she is not prepared to nationalise the industries without paying any compensation. She knows that it is beyond the power of the government to compensate all these industries at present. So, the Government of India are following a mixed economy—an economy in which nationalisation and private enterprise will work side by side.

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### SECOND FIVE YEAR PLAN

On the 15th of May, 1956, Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru presented to the 'Loka Sabha' the Second Five Year Plan, with a brief speech by way of introduction. It gives us the considered opinion of our National Government on the draft of the Second Five Year Plan published some time ago. As the Government of India command an overwhelming majority in the Union Parliament, there is no doubt that the plan, now presented, will receive the sanction of the Parliament with little or no modification.

So, we may take the plan as it is, and comment on it safely. In the first place, the total outlay on the plan in the public and

private sectors has risen by one hundred crores. In the result, the total expenditure on the plan has risen to Rs. 7,200 crores. The outlay on the Public Sector remains unchanged at 4,800 crores, which are exactly twice the amount expected to be spent on private industry. The outlay on the Private Sector has, therefore, increased by 100 crores since the publication of the Draft Plan.

There has been relative shift in priorities as between the first plan and the second plan. In the present plan, industries and mining claim about 19 p.c. of the total outlay as against only 8 p.c. in the First Five Year Plan. And of the total outlay of Rs. 890 crores on industries and mining, Rs. 690 crores will be spent on large scale industries, including mining, and only 200 crores for the promotion of village and small scale industries. Transport and Communications account for 29 p.c. of the total outlay, as compared to about 11 p.c. in the first plan.

Again, about 19 p.c. of the total expenditure is to be devoted to Irrigation and Power, and only 12 p.c. to Agriculture and Community Projects. It will be seen that, in the present plan, there is a remarkable shift in priorities as between agriculture and industry. Yet, increased production of food and raw materials must be maintained, not only for the Second Plan period but for several years to come. This is because no progress is possible without a steady and assured food supply to the millions of men and women who will have to work for the all-round success of the plan. It has also been announced that the plan is not final, and it is flexible. It will be revised every year, and it may be revised even within the year, if and when this is desirable in the interests of the country.

Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru declared from his place in the Parliament that his government would try their best to raise the food target by 40 p.c. as against the 15 p.c. allotted in the plan. But the Central Agriculture Ministry differs from the views of the Prime Minister. It thinks that such a high target is neither feasible nor desirable. In its opinion, this will bring down the price of crops, and do great harm to the tillers of the soil. But the Ministry has, it is reliably learnt, decided to raise the food target from 75 million tons, prescribed in the Second Plan, to 80 million tons. This will mean an increase of 23 p.c. as against 15 p.c. recommended in the plan. In doing this, the Central Agriculture Ministry has acted on the advice of distinguished economists who hold that it will be unwise to raise the target in industrial production without a corresponding expansion in agricultural targets. The programme for Irrigation and Power has been so drawn up as to increase the area under irrigation two-fold, and

the supply of power six-fold. It is expected that twenty-one million acres of additional land will be brought under irrigation.

The Plan visualises a large increase in the output of minerals, which is expected to increase by 58 p.c. Special mention is made of coal which is, as it were, the very life of industries in modern times. It is expected that the Public Sector will produce 12 million tons of coal and the Private Sector will raise ten million tons. South India will profit much from the lignite project under which 45 million tons of lignite are to be produced for generating power in a station of 211,000 kilowatts capacity. It is also intended to establish two more fertilizer factories, one at Nangal, and the other at Rourkela. Moreover, it is intended to set up a second D.D.T. plant in Travancore-Cochin.

Social Services take up about 20 p.c. of the total outlay in the Second Plan as against 23 p.c. in the first plan. In terms of percentage the allocation under education, health, and housing are practically the same, but in absolute terms they are much higher. Thus the provision of Rs. 307 crores in the Second Plan is a little less than twice as large as that made in the first plan. It is expected that, by the end of the Second Plan, facilities for education to 63 p.c. of children in the age group of 6-11, and 22.5 p.c. in the age group of 11-14, will be provided.

It is also expected that the national income will increase by 25 p.c. at the end of the plan period, as against 11 p.c. during the years covered by the First Five Year Plan.

One of the most redeeming features of the plan is that it aims at reducing unemployment very considerably. It aims at providing 8 million non-farm jobs. They will absorb the vast numbers of unemployed people in the urban and rural areas, including the unemployed in agricultural and household occupations. It will also provide for the large labour force that will be required for carrying on the industries. The sponsors of the plan will, however, make the best endeavours to create 10 million job opportunities during the next five years.

For the rapid and extensive development of her industries, India must have not only minerals and machinery, but also an army of engineers and technicians. That is why about 50 crores have been allotted for technical education. It is expected that, by 1956-61, the number of technical institutions will increase from 128 to 155. The annual outturn of graduate engineers and diploma-holders is expected to rise from 3,000 and 4,900 respectively to 4,500 and 6,500. The Engineering Personnel Committee set up by the Planning Commission has recommended the setting up of 18 additional Engineering Colleges and

62 Engineering Schools. They have also recommended the expansion of the existing institutions.

The Plan also deals, more or less fully, with the question of finance. The total outlay of the plan is 7,200 crores in which the share of the Public Sector is 4,800 crores. This will be raised from various sources—surplus from current revenues, additional taxations, borrowings from the public, contribution by railways, Provident Fund and other deposits, foreign assistance, and deficit financing. All these will, however, leave a gap of 400 crores. The plan recognises that the only means of filling this gap is additional taxation and the profits of public enterprises.

We shall do well to note that the funds needed for implementing this plan will be shared by the Government of India and the States. Of the total outlay of 4,800 crores, 2,214 crores will be borne by the States. And there will be an investment of 2,400 crores in the Private Sector. In a country like ours there will be vast scope for the development of Private Sector. It will still control many big industries like iron, coal, textiles, sugar, jute, mica, glass, ceramics, motor cars, bicycles, and many other industries. Under the Second Five Year Plan, the government will set up three huge steel factories of their own. Yet, a vast field will be left to the Private Sector. Indeed, in these days India must follow a mixed economy for the fullest development of her industries.

The Second Five Year Plan will build on the gains made by the First Five Year Plan. The Planning Commission has in view a socialistic pattern of society in which all men will have equal opportunities for employment and equal rights and privileges. Moreover, it aims at raising the national income by the rapid development of industries. It also encourages the Private Sector to run small-scale industries and produce consumer goods for the benefit of the country. And, what is most important, it will reduce inequalities of income among the teeming millions of India by a more even distribution of wealth, economic power, and social justice. The First Five Year Plan has made the people plannned, and the Second calls upon them to give of their best to the country and co-operate with the government in this noble work for the advancement of India.

The most striking feature of the plan is what Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru describes as its flexibility and possibility of revision from year to year in the light of experience. Even before the plan has been passed by the National Parliament, it has been announced that the targets of food and consumer goods will be raised in the interests of the country.

Let us hope that it will give much more than what it has promised, and bring peace, contentment, and prosperity to the people of India.

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### NATIONALISATION OF LIFE INSURANCE

In our times, Insurance is one of the greatest assets of national life. Society has become complex and the uncertainties and risks in human affairs have considerably increased. A family may be rendered helpless on the death of its earning member. A business man may be ruined by a fire or a shipwreck. Insurance is nothing but a means of guarding against these unforeseen contingencies. It is the most effective economic institution that makes for social security.

There are some persons who think that insurance is another name for gambling and, therefore, they are prejudiced against it. But insurance, truly speaking, is the opposite of gambling. In gambling what is certain is made uncertain, whereas by insurance what is uncertain is made certain. For instance, a godown full of jute is destroyed by fire. The owner does not know how to recoup the loss ; his future is uncertain. But if the godown is insured, the insurer will compensate the owner for the loss sustained, and the owner will make a fresh start. In other words, insurance relieves him of his anxiety and uncertainty about the future. A gambler, on the other hand, loses his money in hand in the hope of a prize in future, which, unless he is extremely lucky, eludes his grasp.

There are various forms of insurance. The object of fire insurance is to afford protection against loss caused by fire. Marine insurance guards against the perils of the sea. Life insurance relieves a man of his anxiety about his children and dependants in case of sudden death ; it is, in other words, a cover against death. Similarly, there may be insurance against sickness, burglary, road accidents, and various other types of risk.

Life insurance, however, stands in a class by itself ; and deserves special attention. It is the most extensive and popular of all forms of insurance. A Life Insurance Agent is to be found in the remotest village, trying to secure business from the humblest cultivator. The business of Life insurance, though of recent growth, has spread all over the civilised world ; and in India too, it has immensely gained in popularity. Everybody now-a-days realises the utility and importance of life insurance. We propose to discuss below the position of the life insurance business in India.

All credit goes to private enterprise for the development of this business in India. In the beginning only foreign insurance companies were doing life business in India. But in the first quarter of the twentieth century, several Indian companies were established for doing this kind of business. The volume of business went on increasing from year to year. Too rapid progress of the business afforded opportunities for malpractices. Unscrupulous opportunists got into the business, and they tried to enrich themselves at the cost of the policy-holders. Instances of misappropriations and unsound or fraudulent investments became more frequent. Again, a life insurance company, even when its financial position is unsound, can carry on for quite a number of years, because payments are to be made on policies at long intervals. Sometimes, an act of malfeasance or misfeasance is detected too late.

For the reasons stated above, the Government of India felt the necessity of controlling the business of life insurance with the ultimate object of nationalising it in the interests of the policy-holders and the general body of the public. Again, a large amount of money, available for long period investment, is controlled by an insurance company. A huge sum will be required by the Government for the success of the Second Five Year Plan. Government naturally thought of taking charge of the considerable life-fund in the hands of the various life insurance companies.

The President of India, with a view to controlling the business of life insurance, promulgated an ordinance, called the Life Insurance (Emergency Provisions) Ordinance 1956, on the 19th of January, 1956. The said ordinance has now been replaced by an Act of the Parliament of India, known as the Life Insurance (Emergency Provisions) Act, 1956.

The object of the said Act is to provide for the taking over, in the public interest, of the management of life insurance business with a view to its nationalisation. This Act was passed on the 21st of March, 1956. The principal features of the Act are as follows :—

The business of life insurance, henceforth, is to be known as controlled business, because other forms of insurance such as fire, marine, etc., business will continue to be under private management. The management of the controlled business, on and from the 19th day of January, 1956, shall vest in the Central Government. The Central Government may, as soon as it is convenient administratively so to do, appoint any person as custodian for the purpose of taking over management of the controlled business of a private insurer on behalf of the Central Government. The custodian shall receive such remuneration as the Central Government may fix; and the Central Government may at any time cancel

The appointment of any person as custodian and appoint some other person in his place.

The Central Government may issue such directions to the custodian as to his powers and duties as it deems desirable in the circumstances of the case, and the custodian may apply to the Central Government at any time for instructions as to the manner in which he will conduct the management of the controlled business of the insurer or in relation to any matter arising in course of such management.

Under the Insurance Act, 1938, an insurer is required to deposit two lakhs of rupees with the Reserve Bank of India in respect of his life business. The present Act of 1956 provides that the Central Government may direct that the whole or any part of the deposit made by the private insurer under the Insurance Act of 1938 shall be returned to the custodian appointed to take over the management of the controlled business of the insurer.

Provision has also been made for the payment of compensation to the private insurer for the management of the controlled business vesting in the Central Government. The amount of compensation shall be a sum equivalent to one-twelfth of the annual average of the share of the surplus allocated to the shareholders on the basis of the last two actuarial investigations of the controlled business prior to the 1st of January, 1956. This compensation is to be paid for every month during which the management remains vested in the Central Government.

If any person fails to deliver to the custodian any books of account, registers, or any other documents in his custody relating to the controlled business of the insurer, or retains any property of such insurer, he shall be punishable with imprisonment up to six months or with fine up to one thousand rupees, or with both.

It should be noted that the Life Insurance (Emergency Provisions) Act, 1956 merely provides for the taking over of the management of life insurance business ; ownership does not vest in the Central Government. It is for this reason that provision has been made for the payment of compensation to the existing insurers. Nationalisation, on the other hand, means ownership by the State. If State management proves successful, Government will take necessary steps for nationalisation.

It is apprehended by many that State management will adversely affect the business of life insurance. But everything depends upon the efficiency of the custodians and other officers appointed by the Government for the purpose. It is too early to pass any judgment on the steps already taken and to be taken in the near future by the Central Government for the control of life

insurance business. If we are going to have a socialistic pattern of society, the present move of the Government in this direction must be welcomed.

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### PANCH SHILA

The progress of Science has changed the conditions of life in peace and war. It has worked wonders and given us many things for our comfort and convenience. Steam-engines, Airships, Telegraphs, Electricity, and Wireless have brought the people of the world closer to one another, and we feel that the world is shrinking.

But Science has also let loose evils that threaten to destroy the peace and happiness of the world we live in. It has given us poison gas, atom bombs, and hydrogen bombs that are a terror to all mankind.

In the course of twenty years, two world wars have come and gone. Yet, we have not learnt the lessons of these terrible and deadly conflicts. It was expected that the United Nations Organisation would put an end to war and bring in an era of peace and happiness all over the world.

But our hopes have been belied. And we find that the great nations of the world have been split into two power blocs—one led by the United Kingdom and the United States of America, and the other led by Soviet Russia and her satellites. That is why war clouds are still hanging on the horizon, and we hear the rumblings of a third world war. And today the world is in the throes of a cold war, incited by the selfishness, jealousy, intolerance, and ambition of rival powers in the East and the West. There is a vague feeling of terror and sense of insecurity everywhere.

In the midst of this clash of interests and threat of war, India has been trying to follow the paths of peace. She has realised that the salvation of mankind does not depend on war and conquest of new kingdoms and territories. It can only be attained by peace, good will, love, and charity.

It is in this faith that our Prime Minister, Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru, has given unto the world the 'Panch Shila' or the five principles which alone may save the world from total extinction.

The phrase 'Panch Shila' is very old. More than two thousand five hundred years ago, Lord Buddha laid down five rules of conduct for the guidance of his disciples. But those teachings were meant for moral upliftment in private life.

And they have been used in a different meaning in the present context of world affairs. The first man to use this phrase was President Soekarno of Indonesia. He used it in June 1945, when Indonesia was threatened with Japanese aggression. He resolved to follow Panch Shila as the national policy of Indonesia. He declared that he would organise his country into a co-operative State by adopting the five principles of Nationalism, Internationalism, Republican Government, Social Justice, and Belief in God.

But, in their present form, the five principles can be traced to the Sino-Indian Agreement on Tibet adopted on the 30th April, 1945. The five principles, popularly known as 'Panch Shila', were a sort of preamble to this commercial and cultural treaty. It was perhaps beyond the thought of the authors of this treaty, at the time, that these principles might one day be the turning point of international relations, and pave the way to world peace.

The same principles were reiterated in the joint communique issued by Pundit Jawaharlal and Chou en Lai, Prime Minister of People's China, on the 28th June, 1954. This was during our Prime Minister's historic visit to China. The five principles are :

(i) Mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty, (ii) non-aggression, (iii) non-interference in each other's internal affairs, (iv) equality and mutual benefit, and (v) peaceful coexistence. There is little new in these principles, and one may find similar ideas in the United Nations Charter.

But these principles were reaffirmed at a time when the clash of interests and ideologies between the power blocs led by Russia and America were undermining the prospects of peace and threatening all the world with the possibility of a nuclear war. Indeed, in the Nehru-Chou communique it was declared : "If these principles are applied, not only between various countries but also in international relations generally, they would form a solid foundation for peace and security, and the fears and apprehensions that exist today would give place to a feeling of confidence."

We are glad to find that the hopes of the authors of 'Panch Shila' have been largely fulfilled, as they have met with a warm response from many a nation in the East and the West.

It was these principles that inspired the Asian African Conference at Bandung in April, 1955, and, in a sense, paved the way for the summit talk at Geneva. Indeed, the declaration on world peace and co-operation was based on the recognition of these principles.

It is pleasing to note that, with the passing of time, more countries are coming within the fold of 'Panch Shila'. It is no

longer confined to India and China. It has attracted, within its sphere of influence, Russia, Poland, Egypt, Yugoslavia, North Vietnam, Burma, and Saudi Arabia. We feel that 'Panch Shila' or the Five Principles are a message of peace and good will to a world weary of war.

Humanity stands at cross-roads today. A decision has got to be reached this way or that. Deep is the rot that has set in, deeper the scar than at any other period of man's history. To stop the drift that forebodes ill for the human race, we have to make up our minds not to quarrel and die out, but to live and let live. Co-existence is no longer an abstract theological dogma, but a very real and practicable possibility. Never before did the demand for it enjoy such eager support among the nations of the world as it does today. And the reason is not far to seek.

The world has had enough of bloodshed. It sees nothing heroic in war, rapine, and plunder. And yet, strange to say, men talk of a third world war in the offing, and that because of two power blocs, the one led by the United States, and the other by the U.S.S.R. With the axis-powers laid low, the post-war world stands divided between two hostile camps—the camp of socialism and that of democracy. The question is, can there be any real co-operation between these two camps? Are they not incompatible?

Europe could not decide the issue. For a decision, one had to turn to the East—the vast Asian continent, with nearly half the people of the entire world. Where Europe failed, Asia succeeded. She came forward with her bold and inevitable answer: Peace was the crying need of the hour, and could be ensured only by nations co-existing with one another. This was the message of India and China—the two great champions of world peace.

It is a message on which is based the friendship of India, China, and Soviet Russia. So long as this friendship lasts—and there is no reason to suspect their bona fides—no military alliance is needed to impose peace and security either in Asia or in Europe. The NATO, SEATO, and the Bagdad Pact, it is feared, can only hinder prospects of peace and eventually lead to a fresh flare-up. There seems to be no point in the U.S. offer of liberation from a bondage that does not exist.

If really India, Burma, or Indonesia chooses to go left, there is no need of aggression from without. If India prefers to remain as she is, neither China nor Russia can export revolution from outside. For sheer reasons of expediency, if for no other, they will desist from any such attempt.

On the contrary, supposing the worst comes to the worst, can

Military alliances save the situation ? The alternative to peaceful co-existence is a dreadful co-extinction. It will result in no mere blood-bath, but in a global bonfire. Will that safeguard peace either in Asia or in Europe ? Mere threats cannot intimidate countries like People's China or Soviet Russia. The First World War saw the outbreak of the Russian Revolution, the Second witnessed the emergence of People's China. And the Third will destroy capitalism outright.

To sadder and wiser statesmen of England and France, this is clear as daylight. That is why Britain would like to hasten slowly, while at least, in one instance, France did negotiate peace.

Against the policy of peace laid down by India, Burma, People's China, and Soviet Russia, the United States have come out with their policy of strength. Competition we will welcome, conflict never. A mere threat or military alliance, on the other hand, can no longer ensure world peace. This explains the tremendous reception the Panch Shila or the Five Principles have enjoyed all the world over.

Mr. Dulles thinks—and he thinks aloud—that peaceful co-existence is impossible. But it does no good to ignore reality. In this moving world of ours, differences in social system are bound to exist. But that does not justify interference of other countries. Intervention, on the other hand, is bound to create all sorts of complications, and eventually lead to a global war. And an atomic war, in the present age, will, as Prime Minister Nehru has said time and again, result in the destruction of the human race. Precisely for this reason, on the question of peace, there can be no two opinions. If peace is to be established on a sound basis, it must stand on peaceful co-existence, irrespective of differences in social order. It is not a matter of choice but an urgent necessity.

### LIFE AND LITERATURE

Man has lived in society from the earliest times, and literature is one of his valued contributions to the culture and civilisation of the world we live in. Literature is an expression of the emotive life of the human race, and is almost coeval with the birth of speech. The primitive mind expressed itself in meaningless sounds or chants. So far as these revealed the collective human mind, these sounds or chants had the germs of literature in them. With the progress of human life and growth of civilisation, language and the mode of writing came into being. This was

the beginning of literature, which has now become the fountain of the highest thoughts and ideals of mankind.

From what has been said above, it may be seen that life and literature are bound together closely. A study of the history of literature will reveal that it has undergone changes in its character and form, along with different changes in life. In very ancient times, literature, so far as could be known from specimens in different parts of the world, had a communal stamp upon it. It was the reflection of the collective life of the human race, rather than the distinct life of an individual. The ancient lyrics and chants, myths and legends, as well as the long sagas or epic poems, throw much light on the life of the human race all over the world. As civilisation advanced and led to class-divisions, literature also began to lose its larger appeal and became sectional. So we find that, by the side a more polite kind of literature, there had flourished in every country a kind of folklore of infinite variety. This reflected the life and aspirations of the people in the lower ranks of society. With the growth of democracy, the difference between the classes is gradually narrowing down, and a kind of broader literature is coming into existence.

In this connection, we shall do well to notice that prose is a comparatively later growth. In almost all societies, prose came much later than poetry. This was because prose is the language of reason, and a medium of deep thinking, discussion, and deliberation. Poetry of various types—narrative, descriptive, reflective, and dramatic—held the field for long years. The earliest prose, perhaps, begins with proverbs and maxims.

Although primarily the reflection of the emotive life of the race, or of the individual, literature is also liable to be deeply affected by the currents of thought from age to age. It will be noticed that the literature of the ancient and medieval ages was more spiritualistic; at least it was more occupied with the life of the gods and goddesses or mythical beings. In more recent times, 'the proper study of mankind is man' is the guiding spirit of literature. And the study of man, man as he stands by himself, is the only worthwhile motive of literature. It has also become more and more realistic or objective, and is often coloured by scientific ideas and sociological revelations. As modern life is more materialistic than spiritualistic, more commercial than idealistic, so also has literature become less and less mystic, spiritual, or idealistic. On the contrary, it has become more materialistic in its outlook, and commercial or propagandist in its interests.

It should be remembered that literature, which is preserved as classics, is the precious life-blood of a nation, and flows from

age to age. It is a source of inspiration to a nation in its hours of distress and disappointment. It brings man face to face with his past self, and sets him rethinking about the days that are gone. A country which has produced great literature can never die or fail in the realization of its destiny.

Sometimes it has been argued that literature or art should be studied for its own sake. Of course, literature or art has its own rewards. It has a kind of independence or self-sufficiency or what you will, that is most satisfying. It creates a world apart from the world of real life, and that beauteous life of an ivory tower may seem to have its own sustaining power. There was always such an idea among men of literature. Oscar Wilde, in the late nineteenth century England, made himself infamous by giving it an exclusive importance. He went so far as to declare that literature is the art of lying. What he was doing or what other pure atheists were doing, were only reflecting the decadent spirit of the age, without any contact with the dynamic forces of life. Literature must derive its power and energy from life constantly; otherwise it will lack the vitality and realism that life only can give. It must be written for life's sake.

There may be minds which delight in the purely aesthetic qualities of literature or art; but the larger number of people want to have a more vital kind of pleasure from literature. It should offer them a way of escape from the worries of life, and also inspire them to take up life with revitalised energies. Man should strive to understand life, and to tackle, more firmly and bravely, the problems of his individual and social life. As Matthew Arnold has put it : Literature is a criticism of life, and it is a criticism of life under the conditions of beauty. Literature should please as well as educate, not of course in the way of the special sciences or arts, but in a more general way by developing the faculties of appreciation and understanding, reason and sympathy.

Literature, in modern times, is becoming more and more analytical or psychological. It has taken on many new forms as it applies to itself the methods of the sociological or psychological sciences. This is the result of the growing complicity of the present day life. It is often said that contemporary literature will not survive the age, because of its lack of interest in the eternal things of life. Merely the exploration of social reality or of the individual mind is not enough for literature. We cannot ban idealism or romanticism in literature. This is surely true as it will impoverish literature and also weaken the forces of life at play.

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## RABINDRANATH TAGORE

The poetry of Rabindranath Tagore reveals the soul of India in a glorious light. It gives us a vivid idea of the history, philosophy, and religion of our ancient land. And it is a splendid reflection of the thoughts and ideals, and hopes and aspirations of the people of India, through the ages. What is more, Rabindranath has blended in his poetry all that is best and noblest in the culture and civilisation of the East and the West.

Rabindranath was a poet, philosopher, and prophet, who inspired vast millions of men and women all over the world. Indeed, it was the light of his poetry that attracted many talented Englishmen to his school at Santiniketan. Men like Andrews and Pearson had made Santiniketan their home, and worked as teachers under the inspiring guidance of Rabindranath. And it was the magnetic attraction of his personality that drew many an eminent scholar of the East and "the West to the great institution founded and reared by him. He was one of the noblest men of the world in his time, and he was not only an incomparable poet but also an angel of Light and Liberty.

It will, therefore, be interesting to know a little of his brilliant and eventful life. Rabindranath was born in Calcutta on the 6th May, 1861. He was the youngest son of his father, Maharshi Debendra Nath Tagore. In his boyhood, he read in schools only for a short time. His father thought that the best way of teaching his boy was to place him under the care of excellent tutors at home. That was why Rabindranath received his early education at home. Indeed, he observed, on one occasion, that he had been able to learn just a little, only because he had never crossed the shadow of College Square. And when the University of Calcutta conferred on him the degree of Doctor of Literature, he remarked most wittily that, never before in his life, had he passed through the portals of the University with any degree or distinction, except in the 'borrowed feathers' he was wearing on that day. And with these words, he lifted the wings of his Doctor's gown, and held it up before the audience amid peals of laughter. But his words were full of deep meaning. They meant that the type of education given to our boys and girls is dull, uninteresting, lifeless, and colourless. It is a soulless, joyless education, which does not reveal to our boys and girls the beauty, mystery, and rhythm of life. This is the message of the poet who had loved beauty, art, and music, all life long, and felt that no education is complete that does not combine work with play, and reading with pleasure. In his childhood, he was usually confined in a little room by one of the old servants of his father. Yet, from there, he used to enjoy the beauty of the deep blue sky, the silvery moonlight, and the lovely flowers of his father's garden.

With this ideal of education before him, he started a school at Santiniketan in December, 1901. At that time, there were only a few boys and girls in the school. They were taught and looked after by the poet himself and two or three other teachers. It was a school where the boys not only read their books, but also learnt a little of music, arts, and crafts. They were also encouraged to go out on holiday-trips and enjoy the beauty of Nature all about them. At Santiniketan the classes are held in the open. The boys and girls sit under the cool shade of trees and listen to their teachers. The poet introduced this system of holding open-air classes as, like Wordsworth, he thought that

'One impulse from a vernal wood  
May teach you more of man,  
Of moral evil and of good,  
Than all the sages can.'

Santiniketan is now a beautiful little town. There are miles and miles of open fields round Santiniketan. There are also shady groves of mango trees and gardens smiling with lovely flowers. All these have made Santiniketan one of the beauty spots of India, and many great men have spoken of its quiet, charm, and simplicity. Here the boys and girls live in peace and joy, playing, dancing, and singing the songs of Rabindranath. It is good to remember that the poet has composed more than three thousand songs, that are sung by boys and girls and men and women, all over India.

In 1912 Rabindranath went to England for the second time. There he brought out an English rendering of some of his poems, known as '*Gitanjali*' or 'Song Offerings'. This little book made a stir all over Europe, not only for its beauty, simplicity, and rhythm, but also for the purity and nobility of its thoughts and ideals. It revived, after centuries, the language of the Holy Bible, that breathes poetry and music in every line. For this glorious work, he elicited the warmest admiration of a poet like Yeats, and eminent writers like Earnest Rhys, Dr. Thompson, and Hugh Fausset. Indeed, '*Gitanjali*' is regarded as an inimitable translation of poems written in another language, and perhaps, it has no equal except Fitzgerald's '*Omar Khayam*'. And for his poetic labours as a messenger of peace, Rabindranath was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1913.

Rabindranath was also a brilliant speaker and a most witty and pleasant talker. The speeches he made in Europe were heard by thousands of men and women. When he was in France, many people walked miles and miles to see him. Indeed, men and women all over the world, loved not only to hear but also to see this tall, graceful, and handsome man with his dignified bearing, winning smile, and rich musical voice.

Rabindranath has gained the ear and touched the heart of each and every educated man in the East and the West. He has also deeply influenced the masses of India, who still remember his great name and sing his glorious songs. Yet, he was a Bengalee in his heart of hearts, and spent the best years of his life on the bosom of the Padma in East Bengal. And in his songs, he has described the mighty rivers, rich cornfields, glorious sunshine, and moonlit nights of East Bengal in lines that will be remembered for ever for their beauty and matchless melody. But he was also a very keen and careful observer of life. In his poetry and fiction he has given us vivid and lively pictures of village life—of peasants living in their lowly huts, of the reapers in the cornfields, and of a class of old and wily men of rural Bengal who are no better than wolves in sheep's clothing. He has also described many poor men and women, who deserve our highest respect for their piety, simplicity, and devotion to duty. And we read of many charming women who are the light of Hindu homes in East and West Bengal. As we think of them, we feel that, but for their labour of love and cheerful self-sacrifice, the people of our middle classes would have been ruined by this time.

Rabindranath was an ardent patriot, with a burning passion for liberty. Many of his songs have stirred our young men to live, work, and die for their country. His famous song 'Jana Gana Mana' is now the National Anthem of India. After the massacre of *Jalianwala Bagh* in 1919, there was a reign of terror in the Punjab. In that dark hour of the country, Rabindranath raised his spirited voice against the government of the day. In a letter to the Viceroy, he strongly condemned the happenings in the Punjab, and flung aside his knighthood as a badge of shame and dishonour.

Here we have given only a glimpse of the poet's great, glorious, and eventful life. It is time for us now to glance, a little more fully, at his immortal poetry, drama, fiction, and incomparable prose writings. When he was a little boy, his father used to think that Rabindranath would be an excellent singer, but not a poet. Yet, this little boy was, slowly and surely, making his way into the realm of poetry and romance. His earliest poems, *Sandhya Sangit* and *Prabhat Sangit*, appeared in 1881. But these were only the beginning of a glorious career in poetry. His genius found its earliest expression in *Manasi*, *Sonar Tari*, and *Chitra*, and thereafter he went on writing poem after poem that thrilled the hearts of all lovers of poetry, from end to end of Bengal. In the full bloom of his youth and poetic fervour, he wrote poems like *Chantali*, *Kalpana*, *Katha-O-Kahini*, *Khanika*, *Naivedya*, and *Sishu*. He also published dramas like *Visarjan*, *Raja O-Rani*, *Malini*, *Valmiki Pratipa*, and *Tapati*, and novels like *Naukadubi*, *Chokher Bali*, *Gharey Bairey*, *Gora*, and *Seser Kavita*. *Gora* deals

With a romantic episode in the days of Sepoy Mutiny and deserves, by common consent, the first place in Bengali fiction. Among his poems *Sishu* or the Child is a most remarkable thing in the history of our literature. And it is perhaps the most beautiful revelation of the sweetness, simplicity, and never-failing charm of child-life in any language of the world. Then with *Kheyā* and *Gitanjali*, the most important phase of his poetic career comes to an end. And it was also during this period that his *Jiban-Smriti*, or reminiscences of early life, was published.

In 1912 he went to England and published the *Gitanjali* or *Song-Offerings* for which he earned world-wide fame. This opens another phase of his poetic career, which begins with the appearance of *Balaka* in 1916. The title of the poem was suggested to him by a flock of swans on the banks of the Jhelum, under the dark shadow of hills. In it the poet follows the flights of his fancy and gives us a wreath of poetic blossoms, of which *Shahjehan* is the noblest and grandest. These poems reveal the poet's longing for the infinite and eternal beauty. Their music also is more sublime than that of the poems of his early days. This is followed by a series of splendid poems. All of them are beautiful, but the most delightful among them are *Gitimalya*, *Gitali*, *Mohua*, *Purabi*, and a silvery stream of songs. We are, however, giving our own impression, as Rabindranath has written such a bewildering variety of poems that it is difficult to pick and choose.

Rabindranath was a versatile genius, and he has left behind him dramas, light comedies, short stories, literary criticism, and philosophical and political speeches and pamphlets. Among them *Mayar Khela* or 'Play of Fancy', *Chitrangada*, and *Shyama* are splendid song-dramas. And *Barkunther Khata*, *Shesh-Raksha*, *Tasher Desh*, or 'the Magic Land of Cards', *Chirakumar Sahha*, and *Sarodotsab* are light comedies of the highest order. The one thing to be noted most carefully about these playlets, is the profusion of songs in them, and a torrent of wit and humour, which is never interrupted by a single word tainted with vulgarity. Truly does Carlyle tell us that 'Music is the speech of angels'. Over and above these, the poet has written six volumes of short stories known as *Galpaguchha*. And we shall speak the truth, and nothing but the truth, when we say that each and everyone of those stories is a gem. We feel, moreover, that the same thing may be said of his essays and criticisms. Can anybody ever forget his brilliant articles—*Kabye Upekshita*, or *Shikhar Bahan*?

The people of the West read his works through English translations made by the poet himself. They have not had the

privilege of reading them in the original, with all the wealth of their beauty, romance, and marvellous melody. Yet, they have enjoyed his poetry for its deep religious fervour, his fine sensitiveness to the beauty of the earth and the sky, and his love of childhood, that sparkles through the *Crescent Moon*. His English renderings include *Gitangali*, *Gardener*, *The Crescent Moon*, and the plays, *Chitra*, *The King of the Dark Chamber*, *The Red Oleander*, and *Post Office*. *The King of the Dark Chamber* and *Post Office* have been played in London and many western countries including Russia. Some of his other writings in English are *Sadhana*, *Fruit-Gathering*, *My Reminiscences*, *Sakuntala*, and stories translated under the title of 'Hungry Stones and Other Stories' and 'Broken Ties'. And to crown all, he is also an excellent artist, and his paintings have been warmly admired by art-critics in India and abroad.

Words fail us when we try to snatch even a hasty glance at the wonderful charm and versatility of the poet's genius. Indeed, his mind was a 'globe of miraculous contents', and his voice a 'living lyre'.

Such was the man who passed away on the 7th day of August, 1941. All the world mourns his death and feels that 'a glory has passed away from the earth'. More than a decade has passed away since his death, but the light he has given to the world will never fade.

And as we read his poetry and listen to his songs, we are simply bewildered and lost in a wonderland of fancy, colour, music, mystery, and romance. Truly does the poet sing,

"I know not how thou singest, my master ! I ever listen in silent amazement." My heart longs to join in thy song, but vainly struggles for a voice. I would speak, but speech breaks not into song, and I cry out baffled. Ah, thou hast made my heart captive in the endless meshes of thy music, my master !"

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